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[The FIRST ILLUSTRATED SUPPLEMENT of the SATURDAY REVIEW is now ready. Price One Shilling.]

NOTES.

IN the last couple of weeks we have received dozens of letters pointing out that our view of what has taken place in Parliament is incorrect, and that, as one correspondent puts it, "Mr. Balfour is an abject failure as leader of the House of Commons." These correspondents urge that in the dispute with Sir Henry Howorth, when Mr. Balfour lost his temper, he was so completely in the wrong that his speech was listened to in dead silence by his own supporters. One gentleman assures us that our explanation of Mr. Balfour's rage was wholly incorrect; Mr. Balfour, it seems, did not stay with Sir Henry Howorth when in Manchester, and never spoke to him privately about his intended action in the House. We can only apologize to Sir Henry Howorth for a mistake made in good faith and on what we usually find to be good authority. But though our critics may be right in this or that particular, we cannot believe that their whole indictment is justified. They seem to forget Mr. Balfour made many mistakes last Session; but when on the Irish Land Bill Mr. Carson led a sort of landlords' revolt against him, the leader of the House dealt with his recalcitrant follower in such fashion that there was no necessity afterwards to tighten the bonds of discipline. And so Mr. Balfour may have been too easy going, too casual during this Session. Yet he may atone brilliantly for his faults at any moment.

It may be noticed that we do not urge the commonplace argument that Mr. Balfour is the only possible leader of the House that the Conservative party at this moment possesses; on the contrary, we believe that several excellent leaders might be found in the ranks of the majority. For instance, there is the Rt. Hon. W.L. Jackson, the member for Leeds, whose great qualities have never yet obtained proper recognition either in the House or in the country. Mr. Jackson, it will be remembered, followed Mr. Balfour as Chief Secretary for Ireland, and his detractors say he failed where Mr. Balfour succeeded. This is not true. Mr. Jackson thought that the time for coercion had passed, and tried to inaugurate healing measures, whereupon the landlords howled, and their sympathizers in the English Press declared that Mr. Jackson had failed. For much the same reason Sir Michael Hicks-Beach was said to have failed half a dozen years before in the same position. But there are failures as honourable as successes. Thus no one will deny now that Sir Michael Hicks-Beach makes an excellent Chancellor of the Exchequer. And so we venture to assert Mr. Jackson

would make an excellent leader of the House. And others might be named without going to Mr. Chamberlain, as some of the weaker brethren fear we should have to go, failing Mr. Balfour.

The news from Crete which has caused so much alarm in the City is greatly exaggerated, and we do not regard it as serious in the sense of leading to European complications. The Cretans continue to deserve their ancient reputation as liars, and are always fighting among themselves. Whether Christians or Mussulmans, they are all of the same race, and with the exception of officials there is scarcely a Turk to be found in the island. The state of popular feeling has a curious parallel at Belfast, with its perpetual feud between Protestants and Catholics, and Crete might not inappropriately be named the Ireland of the Eastern Mediterranean. It ought to belong to Greece, and this would be preferred by the greater number even of the Cretan Mussulmans. Probably, however, Greece will be warned by the Powers not to interfere, just as in 1886 the Powers blockaded Greece to prevent her interference, Crete being then, as now, in a state of civil war. At any rate, there is practically no risk of such a crisis as would endanger the peace of Europe. The real cause for anxiety lies still further East—in China—because no one knows what is happening there.

Contrary to general belief, the British fleet in the Eastern Mediterranean is now below its strength of last year; nor has it been reinforced since the outbreak of disturbances in Crete. The French are increasing theirs to some extent; but the *division du Levant* is still very weak. They never keep many ships in that part of the Mediterranean, and an *escadre* is scarcely ever seen there. As a rule, the French ships cruise off the coasts of France, whilst we have nearly always a strong squadron in the Eastern Mediterranean.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer's declaration of the Government policy with regard to Egypt on Friday last week naturally made a considerable stir, both in and outside the House of Commons. The speech was poorly delivered, owing to a bad cold from which Sir Michael Hicks-Beach was suffering; but it was impressive, both because the speaker was evidently the mouthpiece of the Cabinet and because a new and definite policy was enunciated. His very outspoken criticism of French action in Egypt was also calculated to cause excitement; and, as was expected, his statements were the pretext for an attack on England in the French Chamber.

M. Deloncle, who led the assault, is not a politician of much account in his own country: perhaps his name is better known even here than in France. He is a well-

meaning, intelligent man, but carries no weight; he is no statesman in any sense of the word: among English Parliamentarians he might be ranked with Mr. E. J. C. Morton. His speech was merely a method of self-advertisement; there is no real desire for mischief behind his fictitious Anglophobia. In reply to him, M. Hanotaux, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, made a calm dignified speech. It was certainly dull and dry, like all his speeches, but it was adequate to the occasion. Though not a success as a speaker, M. Hanotaux is a good writer and has no small influence in France. His character impresses men in very different ways. Thus Lord Dufferin never liked him because he did not believe M. Hanotaux's truthfulness to be above suspicion. Our present Ambassador on the other hand thinks him charming, and is on the best of terms with him.

In Monday's debate on Sir Charles Dilke's amendment to the Army Estimates, it was significant that although the resolution was negatived by 197 to 63, all the military M.P.'s spoke in favour of it. Colonel Welby made the best speech. His delivery is clear and good: the tone of his remarks was gentlemanly and pleasant. His personal appearance, not especially military, is also to his advantage. Mr. Arnold-Forster spoke with his usual excellence: he is a born orator, full of poetic enthusiasm, and is hard-working, even to a fault. In spite of several good speeches and many good arguments, Sir Charles Dilke's amendment was lost, and the reason is not far to seek. Colonel Welby and his friends were given to understand by the Government that if they voted against the Estimates it would be regarded as a vote of want of confidence. And so they were frightened out of their convictions.

In the same debate Mr. Brodrick made a speech which narrowly escaped being good—an unusual feat for the Under-Secretary of State for War. He is the eldest son of Lord Middleton and nephew of the Warden of Merton. Mr. Brodrick is, unfortunately, very deaf, and, also unfortunately, is plagued with an ever-present consciousness of his own superiority. After every speech he sits down appalled by the feeling that it is only the inadequacy of the English tongue that has prevented him from showing his supreme ability. In common with Mr. Lecky, he has the ridiculous habit of wearing his hat right on the back of his head.

By the way, Mr. Curzon's slip during the Dongola debate in describing himself as a Minister of the Crown laid him open to an amusing "retort courteous" from Mr. Labouchere. Mr. Labouchere had no doubt, he assured the House, that the honourable member would some day be a Cabinet Minister; no one in the House was better adapted for the position; but the base and brutal fact remained that at present he was not a Minister at all, but only the Secretary of Lord Salisbury. Whereat members laughed delightedly, for the Honourable George is not loved. But then, as Burke observed, it is impossible to tax and be loved; and so Mr. Curzon might say it is impossible to be a superior person and be loved. He seeks admiration just as eagerly as Mr. Brodrick seeks to deserve it, the pity of it being that neither of them attains his object.

What is the meaning of the Duke of Devonshire's appearance, on Thursday, before the Liberal-Unionist Council (a body of which nobody ever heard before), and his declaration in favour of "the discussion of questions of general policy" by his followers? The Duke never makes a speech that he can possibly avoid, and he certainly did not drop in at Great George Street just to see how things were going on and to hear his own voice. We have grounds for stating that the speech is intended to inaugurate a new departure which, although it may have the effect of driving a few of the more Radical Unionists into the Opposition camp, will, it is hoped, greatly strengthen the party as a whole by giving it a definite positive policy. Hitherto, not only has it had no such policy, it has been strictly forbidden by its fundamental rule to entertain or discuss a policy on any subject but that of Home Rule. A party cannot live on a denial of Home

Rule at a time when Home Rule has ceased to be a question of urgent policy with any section, and so the rule to which we have alluded has been formally repealed, and the Liberal-Unionists are to have liberty to meet and declare themselves on such questions as education, London government, and workmen's insurance. The step may have results which it is quite impossible to foresee; but it was, of course, inevitable if the party was to be saved from either drifting back to Radicalism or coming over definitely to the Tories.

It is a curious illustration of the secrecy which surrounds the Russo-Chinese agreement that absolutely contradictory accounts of its origin are given in East and West. A writer in this month's "Contemporary" would have us believe that Li Hung-chang and Lobanoff drew it up in concert and sent it ready-made to Peking, where the Emperor was terrorized into signing it by the Empress-Dowager. In the Peking correspondence of the "North China Herald," on the contrary, Li's troubles since his return are ascribed mainly to the bluntness with which he condemned at his first interview, and blamed the Emperor for signing, the very Convention which he is now said to have made! And so with regard to an Anglo-Japanese invasion. That such a spectre may have been conjured up for the Emperor's persuasion is possible; it is difficult to say what lie might not be floated within the precincts of the Imperial Palace at Peking, and this one was well adapted to procure for Russia the right of access to certain ports. But it is not conceivable that a woman like the Empress-Dowager believed it; so one may well hesitate, in presence of the "North China Herald's" story, to believe that she—Li's chief ally—used the argument as alleged.

The "European concert" made its last effective display many months ago, when, upon England's imperative insistence, it compelled the Sultan to withdraw his troops from Crete, and give the island what purported to be a reformed Government of its own. Inasmuch as most of the islanders cared for nothing so much as a fresh opportunity of killing one another, the question of a restraining police force was most important. It was upon this, therefore, that the Sultan haggled longest. It took months to secure his assent to the appointment of Major Bor as chief of the new Gendarmerie. After he had yielded this point, his officials in Crete were privily instructed to object to Major Bor on their own account when he landed, and so the whole matter had to be gone over again, and so late as last week the Consuls of the Powers were still delivering ultimatums on the subject to the obdurate Vali. Then suddenly the Cretans of both creeds took matters in their own hands, and began massacres, here of Moslems, there of Christians, with characteristic impartiality. The Powers raise their hands in horror at this latest flaming example of Ottoman incapacity to rule; the Sultan retorts, not without justice, that the Powers forced him to withdraw his garrisons from the island, and that the responsibility for preserving order is theirs, not his. Nevertheless he will send troops; but at this Greece hurriedly starts her torpedo-boat flotilla for Cretan waters, commanded by the King's second son, with public instructions to resist any attempted landing of Turkish forces on the island. Two days ago the Greek Premier, M. Delyannis, was supposed to be resisting the heroic policy of intervention which the King found himself forced by popular pressure to favour; but by Wednesday M. Delyannis was talking as boldly as the rest about what Greece would do. Thus matters stand as we go to press.

Mr. Marks made a successful maiden speech on Wednesday in the "Sunday closing" debate. He was unable to see why legislation against insobriety or any other offence should be confined to Sundays. If it was wrong to keep public-houses open on Sundays, it seemed to him impossible to escape the conclusion that they ought to be closed altogether. The argument of Mr. Whittaker as to the "protection of the liberties of the people" reminded one of Henri Taine's remark that he had found liberty in America to mean that people wanted to take liberties with

him. Respectable working-men would resent coercion, and it would, in effect, be tantamount to subsidizing bogus clubs. All of which showed sound common sense on the part of Mr. Marks; but the hit of the speech was his citing Sir William Harcourt as one of the strongest opponents of the measure. The doughty champion of local option has a short memory, and he was no doubt thankful to be reminded of the following characteristically vigorous declaration at Oxford:—"I am against the whole system of petty molestation and irritating dictation, whether by a class or by a majority. I do not admire a grand-maternal Government which ties nightcaps upon a nation by Act of Parliament. I am against forbidding a man to have a glass of beer. I am against public-house restriction and Parliamentary regulation. Some want to meddle with the rights of owners of public-houses; others want to invade the rights of owners of private houses: the form is different, but the error is the same. Unless we resolutely set our faces against the whole system, liberty itself will suffer."

The Disestablishment debate in the Commons brought out no new argument on either side; the Opposition leaders clearly thought the discussion inopportune, and left the Front Bench empty; Mr. Balfour treated the motion as a thing *pour rire*. The truth is that an old-fashioned Manchester Liberal like Mr. Samuel Smith does not represent the view of the younger men of his party. He is the only anti-Popery M.P. now in the House, and urges his absurd views about Roman Catholicism with dreary violence.

We must confess that the latest news from Pretoria puzzles us. We took it for granted last week that when the Correspondent of the "Daily Telegraph" assured the world that President Kruger had been made very angry by Mr. Chamberlain's speech, and that in particular Oom Paul was anxious to know what promises he had made and not fulfilled, he was recording facts and not drawing on his own imagination. And this, we believed, not because of any undue faith in Mr. Leo Weinthal, but because we know that President Kruger steadfastly denies that he has made any promises to the Outlanders, just as he also denies passionately that the Johannesburgers suffer under any grievances. But now it appears that Paul Kruger has denied Mr. Leo Weinthal's account, and this denial, we admit, has puzzled us. Can it be that Oom Paul has made up his mind that he has only said those things that he ought to have said, or is there some subtler form of self-deception in the religious intellect?

Prince Bismarck's views in regard to arbitration have been communicated to the "New York World" by Count Rantzaau. Of course the great statesman believes that "no arbitration treaties will ever succeed in abolishing war"; no court has or can have the necessary sanction. And then comes a piece of clear insight which sentimentalists would call cynical: "the terrors of modern warfare, the uncertainty as to the outcome, will do more, at present at least, to prevent war than any treaties." Finally there is a sentence which shows that Prince Bismarck is in closer sympathy with the ideals and aspirations of humanity than his opponents imagine. "The present agitation," he says, "in Great Britain and the United States in favour of international arbitration proves how humanity has advanced; it is to be applauded for that reason, if not for anything else." We are sorry that Prince Bismarck has not seen fit to give his opinion of the American Senate and of the amendments by which that sacro-sanct body is trying to kill the Treaty.

That a man like Mr. John Morley should be the slave of his constituents is bad enough: that he should hug his chains in public is astonishing. Mr. Morley, in addition to being one of the leaders of Her Majesty's Opposition, is a busy man of letters who lives by his pen. The Parish Council of Montrose has some views on the subject of auditing accounts, which we do not doubt are of supreme moment to the nation. Painful to relate, no less than three letters from the Parish Council to Mr. Morley on this vital question are left

unanswered. An indignation meeting is held at Montrose to censure Mr. Morley, who is speaking for the candidate in Forfarshire. Terrified Mr. Morley telegraphs to the parish lawyer to meet him in Edinburgh, and on his return to London obedient Mr. Morley trots off to Dover House to lay before the authorities the views of the Montrose "buddies" on auditing.

Still the Parish Council is not satisfied, and Mr. Morley has to indite and publish in the "Times" a full and abject apology for his omission to answer those three letters, though, as he plaintively remarks, "they were mainly statements of facts and figures, and did not seem to demand reply." On the reading of the apology in the Parish Council, a Councillor jocosely observed, "We may return a verdict of Not Guilty, but don't do it again," while the Chairman added pleasantly, "We shall say that the culprit is discharged." If a man like Mr. Morley suffers this sort of impertinence, what must the ordinary M.P. put up with? We have no pity for these gentlemen, who show far too little spirit in dealing with their constituents. It is said that Lord Justice Rigby, when he sat for Forfarshire, allowed two-thirds of his letters to answer themselves, and had the remaining third answered by a secretary, who used a typewriter. The farmers were furious, but Sir John Rigby had already one foot on the Bench.

The Prince of Wales is nothing if not practical. His Royal Highness has, we think, struck the right note in his appeal, through the press, for the institution of a Commemoration Fund (not a "Diamond Jubilee" Fund, thank goodness!) which shall put the London hospitals on a sound financial footing. As set forth in the scheme, this desirable end is to be obtained, not so much by an increase in amount from those who already subscribe to the hospitals—though such increase would be welcome—as by an increase in the number of those who can only afford to give a small sum yearly. It seems that at present the contributors to hospital funds in London number less than 1 in 100 of the population, whereas the in-patients and out-patients number 2 and 37 per 100 of the population respectively. From these figures it appears that less than half of the in-patients and not quite 1 in 37 of the out-patients contribute anything at all to the funds of the institutions whence presumably they derive so much good. This shows gross indifference at any rate, if not actual ingratitude, on the part of hospital patients generally.

There can be little doubt that the "wholesale, indiscriminate and hasty relief" as given at present in the out-patient and casualty departments of many of our hospitals is answerable for, in some measure at least, the excess of expenditure over income. The out-patient department of a hospital is intended to supply special skill in treatment of urgent cases of disease, and should neither be resorted to by those suffering from small ailments nor by those who can afford to pay for medical advice. That hospitals are resorted to by many who can well afford to call in a doctor we know; and the reason may be, in some cases, that the patient expects to get, and does get, better advice in the hospital than he would outside. We are told that "pints of medicine are wasted on out-patients who come to these institutions to get better of their over-night libations," and that one hospital "is crowded by the servants of the *élite* of Belgravia." One physician states that "50 per cent. of the out-patients who come into my room ought not to come there at all"; another says that he knows of a man with an income of £1,000 a year who is being treated at a public hospital. No wonder many of our hospitals are up to the eyes in debt. Let them be conducted on practical commercial lines and with more discrimination in admitting out-patients, then they need not fear the deficiency in their incomes, which at present necessitates constant begging.

Mr. J. F. Hogan, M.P., has been on a trip to Canada. Naturally, therefore, on his return he has confided to the gentle interviewer the secret of Canada's salvation. According to the "Westminster Gazette," Mr. Hogan is of opinion that the "Canadian Liberals are and

always have been staunch Free-traders." Then, it may be asked, why don't they proceed with their schemes for freeing imports now that they have got into office? Mr. Hogan's defence of their inactivity is naive and revealing. He points out that a revision of the Tariff would bring with it "commercial unrest, dislocation of trade, and an appreciable deficit in the national revenue." Of course it would; but it was unkind of Mr. Hogan so to give his Canadian Liberal hosts away. Still, Mr. Hogan deserves our thanks for having placed Free-trade in such a compact nutshell for the instruction of Westminster Gazetteers.

The writer in our columns who dealt last week with Sir Courtenay Boyle's report was suavely critical. Lord Masham, in his letter to the Press on the same subject, has adopted a much more uncompromising line. In his view Sir Courtenay's statements are "utterly delusive and altogether unreliable," and he is filled with scorn of the Statistical Department of the Board of Trade, which (he asserts) "has been in the hands of a clique of Free-traders who have for long years and for party purposes endeavoured to bolster up, by every sort of misleading statement, both of facts and figures, a ruinous fiscal policy and a falling cause." Certainly this indictment does not lack in vigour; nor, we are afraid, does it lack substance. It cannot be gainsaid that the Board of Trade's Statistical Department has got into the hands of gentlemen who, though they are eminent statisticians, do not regard their official functions with that rigid impartiality which the country has a right to demand. They happen to be Free-traders, and they make no scruple to help their cause in office hours. In excuse it may be pleaded for them that they regard Cobdenism as the official established economic faith of England, and that they are as much within their right and duty in officially supporting its doctrines as they would be (should occasion offer) in supporting the doctrines of the Established Church. But the country should at least be made aware of the fact.

We are not surprised to learn that the Newspaper Society is considering what steps can be taken to put a stop to the epidemic of bogus libel actions. Of Mr. Brooks's first action against "Truth" we cannot, perhaps, complain. The result was certain from the first, but a man must have one chance, it may be said, of clearing his character. But when Mr. Brooks, safe in his impecuniosity, proceeds to bring half a dozen other actions against other papers for the same libel the thing becomes a scandal. It costs him nothing and it costs the newspapers a great deal.

Last week we were obliged to comment with considerable severity on a series of memoirs of the Hazlitt family, and we found it stated a day or two afterwards that the publisher had determined to withdraw the book from circulation. If he has taken this step, it is greatly to his credit, and the fact will give us an increased respect for his discretion. We were sorry to feel it our duty to point out the defects of the volumes in question, for their author, though never sufficiently awake to what the dignity of a literary tradition demands, has done reputable work in the past. But the reception his autobiography has met with will teach him a salutary lesson, or will at least be a warning to others. Memoirs of the class of which this was an unusually flagrant example are in danger of becoming a plague to the bookshops. Every man who has dabbled in printer's ink, however inconsiderable his gifts, or his insight, or his experience, considers himself qualified to present the world with his "reminiscences." The production of a work of this kind gives him the opportunity to revenge himself on society if he has not attracted its notice, or to belittle great names if he is conscious that they outshine his. The facts contained in such books are usually so inexact or so immaterial that they confuse history while pretending to add to it, and, above all, their publication is apt to break down even more and more completely the barriers of decency and proper manners. It is an unpleasant task to expose the pretensions of such writers, but it is not an unwholesome thing occasionally to "make an example."

IRISH TAXATION.

IT is doubtful whether in this party-ridden land of ours it is possible for any of us to take an open-eyed and detached view of any political question. Every one, no matter how sincere his desire to be fair, is unconsciously biassed by the prejudices in which he has been educated or which have grown upon him; and this is the more true of questions relating to Ireland because of the great bitterness, the exceeding antagonism, which those questions have always excited. Nevertheless, Irish legislation calls for unbiased and dispassionate consideration perhaps more than any other part of the policy of the Empire; and we believe that this is so far recognized by the majority of English Unionists that they are willing, and eager, to accord a full, and indeed an overflowing, measure of justice to Ireland in regard to the financial relations of the two countries. It is our faith in English common-sense rather than in Irish gratitude that moves us to lay before our readers a suggestion for a compromise which, while it seems to us equitable in principle, would certainly leave Ireland no vestige of grievance on the score of taxation.

A brief review of the history of the financial relations between Great Britain and Ireland since the Act of Union in 1800 is essential to a fair comprehension of the subject. The Act provided that Ireland should pay two-seventeenths of the whole expenditure of the United Kingdom, and that proportion was maintained, in theory, till 1817. Fifteen of those seventeen years were years of war; and despite greatly increased taxation, the revenue of each country was far below the expenditure, and the Irish national debt rose from £28,000,000 to £112,000,000. In 1817 the revenues were amalgamated and a common fund was established—the "Consolidated Fund"—out of which all expenditure for the whole kingdom has since been defrayed. It had become evident that the proportion payable by Ireland under the Act of Union was too high; but it is needless to discuss this point, because she actually paid barely one-seventeenth, instead of two-seventeenths, and ran into debt for the rest, and the whole of that debt, as well as what she owed before, became in 1817 part of the debt of the United Kingdom. We are only concerned, therefore, to notice that the unification of the national exchequer—the completion, so to speak, of the partnership—was, in view of the ratio of liabilities to revenue in each case, distinctly favourable to Ireland. The earlier years of the period subsequent to 1817 are also unimportant to the inquiry, because it was not till much later that any attempt was made to assimilate the taxation of Great Britain and Ireland. To be sure, equal duties were levied on tea and tobacco; but in the five years 1817-21 some twenty millions of revenue were raised annually in Great Britain from taxes not imposed at all in Ireland, and there were other taxes which were levied at a higher rate in Great Britain.

In fact, the "abatements or exemptions" promised to Ireland under the Act of Union remained very considerable for more than thirty years after the amalgamation of the exchequers. It is true that certain taxes imposed in Great Britain during the great war were remitted, and in 1845 (the date of the commencement of the Irish famine) the annual yield of exclusively British taxes had fallen to 14½ millions. Nevertheless, we find that Great Britain's contribution to the common purse was rather greater in 1850 than 1820, while Ireland's was appreciably less.

Then came a truly remarkable decade. Famine and disease had decimated the population of Ireland; the agitation of O'Connell had been succeeded by the open insurrection of the "King of Munster"; whole districts had gone out of cultivation. The period immediately following those terrible times was chosen by Mr. Gladstone, then Chancellor of the Exchequer, for heavily increasing the taxation of the country. In 1853 he extended the Income-tax to Ireland and raised her Spirit duties from 2s. 8d. to 3s. 4d. a gallon, and in 1854 he again raised them to 4s. a gallon. His example was followed by succeeding Chancellors till in 1858 the Spirit duties were 8s. a gallon, as in England; and in 1860 the rate for both countries was raised to 10s. In consequence of these measures, the revenue contri-

buted by Ireland rose from £4,861,000 in 1849-50 to £7,700,000 in 1859-60, an increase of 58 per cent!

Meanwhile quite a contrary process had been in operation in Great Britain. The introduction of Free-trade had obviously been more advantageous to England, with its numerous and important manufactures, than to an almost purely agricultural country like Ireland; and, whether for this reason or for others, the fact remains that while the Irish were emigrating or starving the prosperity of England increased in an extraordinary degree. Yet during the decade under notice Great Britain's contribution to the Exchequer only rose from £51,870,000 to £61,386,000, an increase of 18 per cent. as against the increase of 58 per cent. in necessitous Ireland! Evidently the condition laid down in the Act of Union—that equal taxation should be subject to "such particular abatements or exemptions in Ireland . . . as circumstances may appear from time to time to demand"—had been lost sight of entirely.

The changes of relative taxation since 1860 have not been important; and the difference in the amount of revenue produced affords an interesting measure of the relative progress of the two countries. Ireland is still contributing some 7½ millions annually to the Exchequer, as in 1860, while the growth of wealth in Great Britain has brought up her contribution from 61 millions to 90 millions. But, although Irish revenue has remained practically stationary for seven-and-thirty years, Irish expenditure presents a very striking contrast indeed. Out of £7,700,000 of revenue in 1860 only £2,304,000 was expended for Irish domestic purposes, leaving no less than £5,396,000 towards Imperial expenditure; whereas at the present time nearly 6 millions go to exclusively Irish purposes, and only 2 millions are available for Imperial needs. We may note, in passing, that the greater part of this remarkable inversion of the figures dates from the time when Mr. Parnell became a power in politics.

The increase of Irish local expenditure acquires peculiar importance when we come to consider the rival positions which have been taken up in the controversy. On the one side it is contended that the taxation of the two countries should be proportionate to their "taxable capacity," which, in the opinion of the recent Commission, is in the ratio of twenty to one; on the other side this ratio is not specifically disputed, but it is urged that each country should be required to pay its own local expenses first, and that only the balances available for expenditure on purposes common to both countries should be revised in accordance with "taxable capacity." According to one theory Ireland is paying 2½ millions too much; according to the other she is paying 1 million too little. Now, if Ireland had an absolute voice in the matter of her own internal expenditure, or if the existing rate of expenditure in Ireland could be proved to be an irreducible minimum, the latter argument would rest on very strong ground. There would still be the fact that English trade gains more than Irish trade by the Union; there would still be the recognized expediency of taxing a man according to what he can afford and not according to some canon of abstract injustice. But it might be answered that both these points were sufficiently considered in admitting the criterion of "taxable capacity" at all, and logically the position would be almost unassailable. The matter is seriously altered, however, when we see that in thirty-seven years Irish expenditure has almost doubled itself, while revenue has been at a standstill and population has been decreasing. Indeed the cost of certain items—notably the Constabulary and the Law charges—is admitted on all hands to be abnormally heavy; and we are confronted with the startling fact that, if the local expenditure in 1859-60 were taken as the basis of computation, Ireland would be paying £5,730,000 towards Imperial expenditure, whereas one-twentieth of the British contribution would be only £3,371,000—that is to say, she would be over-taxed nearly 2½ millions a year, which is the very amount arrived by those who apply the test of "taxable capacity" to the whole revenue.

Yet we do not find ourselves in accord with that theory either. Taxes are imposed in order to meet certain definite demands upon the Exchequer. If those demands did not exist, no taxes would be required;

and therefore it seems impossible to maintain logically that the incidence of taxation should be regulated solely by "taxable capacity," without any regard whatever to the objects on which the money is to be spent. Furthermore, if we adopt the suggestion of the late Mr. Childers that some two and a half millions sterling should be expended annually by Great Britain in developing the resources of Ireland, we are confronted by the absurdity that the grievance now complained of would, according to the test of "taxable capacity," remain just where it was; and so indeed it would if we were to disband our army and sell our fleet and apply the whole of the proceeds to Irish purposes. Nor can a system reasonably be considered fair under which the rich Irishman, who is already more lightly taxed than the Englishman of equal means, would be still more favourably treated. Surely, then, this cannot be the true remedy.

There is another point of view from which the question may be regarded. Nobody imagines that the Irishman individually is taxed more heavily than the Englishman or Scotsman. On the contrary, Ireland pays considerably less per head of population than either England or Scotland. The true reason why the Irishman is taxed more in proportion to his income is that he pays very much more in indirect than in direct taxation. His grievance is essentially a poor man's grievance. This is the contention of Sir Thomas Sutherland, who was a member of the late Commission, and it appears to us to be perfectly just. But when he goes further and, declining to regard Ireland as a "separate financial entity," maintains that the grievance, if any, can only be dealt with by changes of taxation applicable to the whole of the United Kingdom, we are unable to follow him. It is as though a judge should declare that no suitor should be righted until every one in the world had his own. We venture to think that Sir Thomas Sutherland had hold of the right clue, but he failed to follow it up. Ireland admittedly is very poor—that is, Ireland contains a large proportion of very poor people. Direct taxation, such as the Income-tax and the Death duties, passes over their heads; it is indirect taxation that weighs on them. We propose that the principle of taxation according to taxable capacity should be applied to indirect taxation alone; that Ireland's share of indirect taxation, which now stands at about one-ninth of that contributed by Great Britain, should be reduced to one-twentieth, or whatever proportion may be ascertained on thorough analysis—renewed, say, every ten years—to represent the relative taxable capacity of the two countries. Assuming the proportion of 1 to 20 to be correct, this would reduce the Irish revenue by about 3 millions a year. We certainly do not think that this amount should be made good by an additional tax on commodities in Great Britain, which would practically compel the poor Englishman and the poor Scotsman to pay for the poor Irishman's whisky and tobacco; and a more equitable source of revenue is not so far to seek. Great Britain still pays some £4,000,000 in taxes which are not imposed in Ireland at all. We propose that this anomaly should cease. There is no manner of reason why the well-to-do Irishman living in Ireland should escape the Inhabited House Duty and the Assessed Taxes. But we would go further still. Every resident Irishman, rich as well as poor, would benefit by the reduced duties on commodities; and an additional 1d. or 2d. on their Income-tax would probably leave all but the wealthiest of them with a balance on the right side in consequence of the new arrangement. The rest of the deficiency in revenue might be counterbalanced by a reduction of local expenditure.

Whatever may be thought of this or any other scheme, one thing at any rate is clear. If "taxable capacity" is to play any part in the matter, the methods to be adopted for its computation should be more completely examined and discussed. We had intended to say something on this point also, but it must be deferred to another opportunity. We have endeavoured to discuss this very debatable question in a fair spirit and to suggest a workable compromise; but we are none the less prepared for the familiar fate of those rash people who try to compose a squabble between husband and wife.

AN ARCTIC COLUMBUS.

A DISTINGUISHED English traveller—himself the author of some of the most charming books of travel published in recent years—is credited with the saying that Dr. Nansen is the greatest explorer the world has seen since Columbus. It is always difficult to "place" a contemporary, and the world has grown so accustomed to the language of hyperbole in connexion with the hero who happens for the moment to be on the pedestal that no one takes such language very seriously. And yet now and again in the history of humanity there must recur one of those primitive personalities destined to leave their mark not only on their own day and generation but on every succeeding generation. The man in the street, who knows no better, is inclined to wonder why all this fuss is made about Dr. Nansen, "because, you know, he didn't get to the Pole after all," and the more instructed person, who knows that it was no part of Dr. Nansen's original plan to reach the precise spot which marks the northern axis of our globe, is inclined to think that his principal achievement is that he succeeded in getting three degrees, more or less, nearer to the Pole than any other Arctic explorer has been able to do. That in itself is, indeed, no mean thing to have done. For it had taken something like two hundred and seventy-five years for Arctic explorers of the old school to add the previous three degrees to the Arctic record, and to have added three more degrees to that record in as many years is a feat of which any explorer might well be proud.

But Dr. Nansen's title to be reckoned kin with the great Genoese lies not so much in what he has accomplished as in the conception of it. He has revolutionized Arctic exploration. And by one of those quaint freaks of fortune in which the fickle goddess delights, his most persistent critics have, willy nilly, been transformed into the most triumphant witnesses to his fame. When Nansen first announced his belief in the existence of an ice movement across the Polar area from the neighbourhood of Behring Straits and the north coast of Siberia towards the east coast of Greenland, he was denounced, in language more or less polite, as an ignoramus by the men who were accepted, as the leaders of public opinion in Arctic matters on both sides of the Atlantic. And it must frankly be admitted that the evidence on which he based a theory so radically opposed to all the accepted conceptions of the North Polar area was painfully small in quantity. There was the discovery of the "Jeannette" relics on the south-west coast of Greenland, the finding of some stray pieces of drift wood which in character resembled the wood of the Siberian forests on the east coast of Greenland, and the further fact that some mud scrapings taken from ice off the Greenland coast appeared to favour the theory that ice and mud were alike of Siberian origin. It was little enough to go on. It was too little for the experts. But it was enough for Dr. Nansen, who promptly announced his intention of putting his newly formed theory to the test by organizing an expedition which should drift across the Polar area as the "Jeannette" relics, the drift wood and the mud deposits had done. If before he was an ignoramus, he was now little short of a criminal. On this side of the Atlantic the conscript fathers of Arctic exploration shook their venerable heads over the rash projects of the greatly daring youth. But most, if not all, of them had made the personal acquaintance of Dr. Nansen, and the knowledge which they thus gained of the man, combined with the traditional courtesy with which an honest opponent is generally treated in this country, induced a certain moderation in the language employed for which those using it cannot now be too thankful.

In the United States a similar moderation was not observed. In particular General Greely, whose name is associated with one of the most ill-starred expeditions in the whole history of Arctic exploration, was conspicuous for the acrid style in which he denounced the projected journey. "It seems to me," he wrote in a magazine article, "to be based on fallacious ideas as to physical conditions within the Polar regions and to foreshadow, if attempted, barren results, apart from the suffering and death among its members." Again,

General Greely committed himself to the proposition that "we know almost as well as if we had seen it that there is in the unknown regions an extensive land which is the birthplace of the flat-topped icebergs or the palæocrystic ice." It is not very greatly to General Greely's discredit that he entertained views as to "the physical conditions within the Polar regions" which are now shown to be erroneous. Other even more distinguished Arctic travellers have drawn equally faulty deductions; but where it was, after all, a matter of deduction a certain modesty is not entirely out of place. Of this quality, however, there is little enough in the dictum that "Arctic exploration is sufficiently credited with rashness and danger in its legitimate and sanctioned methods, without bearing the burden of Dr. Nansen's illogical scheme of self-destruction." This was written about a couple of years before the "Fram" left Lysaker Bay on its memorable journey; but little more than a year ago General Greely was still in the same mind, for in his "Handbook of Arctic Discoveries" he states that "Dr. Nansen in 1893 initiated a novel and most dangerous plan. Ignoring the accepted canons of ice navigation, of avoiding besetment and of following the protected lee of land masses, he avowed his intention of putting his ship into the great ice-pack north-east of the Kara Sea; thence he expects to be carried by the ice-drift across the Pole." We may ignore the inaccuracies of detail in this statement of Dr. Nansen's intention, but its main statement cannot be denied. His plan did "ignore the accepted canons of ice navigation." It was based on an assumption as to the physical conditions existing within the Polar area which was diametrically opposed to the views which had been accepted for centuries by successive generations of Arctic explorers. His predecessors had made it their chief endeavour to avoid "besetment." Nansen announced his intention of thrusting the "Fram" into the ice whenever a convenient opportunity presented itself. To follow "the protected lee of land masses" was equally the shibboleth of the older school. Nansen's calculations completely ignored this venerable maxim.

It is not, perhaps, easy now to realize how big a thing it was for the young Norseman to form his own conclusions and to act on them, in face of the almost universal opposition of the most instructed opinion of his time. Now that we know that there is no great land mass in the neighbourhood of the Pole, that the Polar Sea instead of being shallow is of very considerable depth, and that instead of an ice-mantle of incredible thickness there is in the region of the Pole a constant shifting mass of drift-ice, it is easy enough to minimize the voyage of the "Fram." But these things were not known when Nansen set his face towards the unknown North. It is another version of Columbus and the egg. Now that Nansen has shown the way others may follow in his footsteps, and may reach higher latitudes than did he and Johansen. It is quite conceivable that were the "Fram," or some other ship built on similar lines, to be frozen in at a point more to the North-East than that at which the "Fram" entered the ice-pack, the drift might carry it across the Pole itself. But nothing can rob Nansen of the glory that to him is due the initiation of a new method of Arctic exploration. His own story of the voyage of the "Fram" is not yet published, though it may be expected in a day or two. It will doubtless be full of interest; but the main outlines of the story are already known. Others have shown not one whit less courage and determination in the face of difficulties, others have endured privations and hardships with equal serenity of temper; but in the whole history of Arctic exploration there is no man who has joined to these qualities of mind and body that penetrative intellect which enabled Nansen to see for himself, free from all preconceptions and prejudices, the essential elements of the problems which the Arctic region presented to mankind. Henceforward new and fruitful methods of exploring the unknown areas of the frozen North are open to us, and it is this rather than the positive results of the voyage of the "Fram," great as they unquestionably are, which constitutes Nansen's title to be regarded as a prince among modern explorers, as the Columbus of the Arctic regions.

THE ARBITRATION TREATY.

THE celebrated Arbitration Treaty which was to inaugurate a new era of peace and good will with special reference to the English-speaking peoples of the earth is visibly fading away into thin air. We are told, and indeed have no reason to doubt, that the more intelligent Americans welcomed the notion of this treaty, and are earnestly, and even prayerfully, supporting its ratification. But educated public opinion in the United States is one thing and the Senate is quite another. For the past dozen years or more it has been impossible to discuss any phase of affairs at Washington without having it explained that the great heart of the American people palpitates with all sorts of noble and lofty aspirations; but that Congress is a perverse and froward institution which persistently misrepresents and stultifies the nation's will. Formerly it was the House of Representatives which most often played this wicked part, and at the expiration of each successive Congressional term all the wealth of America's journalistic resources in the way of expletive and oburgation was taxed to prove that the passing House had been worse than any of its predecessors. Latterly, however, the Senate seems to have lapsed into a chronic state of depravity which renders the fitful crimes of the Lower Chamber almost venial by comparison. Not a palliating word is ever heard nowadays in extenuation of its behaviour. It is the Senate which does every vicious thing that is done. Popular opinion denies it not only character but brains, and habitually assumes that if opportunity offers for any mean trick or foolish blunder in legislation the Senators will race with one another to embrace it. This is the American view of the Senate as it is reported to us by the large body of American newspapers, and we must admit that there seems much to be said for it.

In the present instance, a Treaty that is approved by an overwhelming majority of the people in both countries, and that English legislators would have accepted blindfold, had their opinions been asked, upon the bare assurance that it tended to bring together into more harmonious relations the two great branches of the English-speaking world, is blocked at Washington by this egregious Senate, for reasons which bear no apparent relation to the merits of the Treaty itself. Some of the opposition is avowedly due to unwillingness that Mr. Cleveland should quit office with the credit of having carried through so beneficent a measure, and the fact that in order to accomplish this it has to be denied that the measure is beneficent makes no difference. Other Senators oppose it from other motives no more worthy, and others from sheer ignorance and narrowness of mind. These imputations are not ours; they are agreed upon by all the independent newspapers in America. It is also practically conceded that in its original form there is no chance of the Treaty being ratified. So far as the present Session is concerned, the choice lies between three alternatives: the Treaty may be kicked out altogether, it may be ratified with amendments which destroy its value, or it may be suffered to lapse without action of any sort. This last is the most likely to happen—in which case it would rest with the new Administration, which comes in on 4 March, either to adopt Mr. Olney's policy with regard to the Treaty or frame a new one of its own. The Senate with which Mr. McKinley will have to work will certainly be no more favourable to the Treaty than the present body. The terms of thirty Senators expire on 4 March, but about half of them have been re-elected, and the newcomers as a whole are said to be worse than those they supplant. The new Secretary of State, Mr. John Sherman, is even now engaged, in his capacity as a Senator, in doing all he can to render the Treaty a ridiculous abstraction which neither Lord Salisbury nor Mr. Olney would consent to accept. Under all these circumstances, it may as well be granted that arbitration "is off."

It may as well be said, too, that disappointment over this dismal collapse of the Arbitration dream will be infinitely keener and more general on this side of the water than in America. For one thing, our need was immeasurably greater than theirs. We are a people with a multitude of irons in the fire;

any week may bring us face to face with a complication in the Mediterranean or on the Nile, in India or in China or in Siam, which will jeopardize the very existence of the Empire. The whole map of what is called the Old World is studded with danger-points for us. Naturally, therefore, the possibility of securing a pledge of absolute security from menace in the New World seems to our eyes a blessed thing. It was long ago discovered by our critics that we have a talent for quite sincerely convincing ourselves that the beatitudes walk hand in hand with our interests. When people used to say of Mr. Gladstone that he could argue himself into a state of serene moral exaltation over any dubious scheme, once he had adopted it as a matter of policy, they really touched upon a national trait. We are far from saying that there is not among Englishmen a very honest and tolerably universal feeling of something like affection for the idea of political brotherhood between the two English-speaking Powers, but it is also true that our need for such a brotherhood is much more urgent than is that of the United States. It is characteristic of the better class of American publicists, editors, clergymen, and other leaders of public opinion that they have laid no stress upon this fact, but have welcomed the Treaty upon the highest and broadest grounds of international ethics.

Their attitude toward the entire subject of Arbitration, and the duties of the English-speaking peoples to each other, has been so fine that it seems almost ungracious to inquire why the good people in America—the thoughtful, reasoning, fair-minded people—are so absurdly powerless to control the working of their governmental machinery. When a great emergency arises, they never find it difficult to assert themselves, and to show that they are in a majority. But with the passing of the immediate crisis, their influence upon the conduct of public affairs at once disappears. It is entirely credible, for example, that the Senate when it mutilates and hangs up the Arbitration Treaty does so in defiance of the sentiments of the American people as a whole. It is only by believing this, and for that matter by assuming always that Congress is unworthy of the nation it purports to represent, that Englishmen are able to maintain that friendly view of Americans in general which is now so universal among them. But it is a puzzling sort of excuse, none the less. If the American people are not responsible for the performances of their two Houses of Congress, then where is responsibility to be found anywhere? The freest and most fully exercised system of universal suffrage in the world produces directly the House of Representatives, and also the forty-five Legislatures which are charged with the selection of the Senate. By all accounts these two bodies deteriorate in character and ability as the years go on. In the three great States of New York, Pennsylvania and Illinois, for instance, with a combined total population of 17,000,000, containing the three largest cities in the Western Hemisphere and owning two-fifths of the wealth of the Republic, the three men selected by the Legislatures to enter the Senate next month as representatives of these large commonwealths are denounced on all sides as small-brained and unprincipled mediocrities, unworthy of the slightest intellectual or moral respect. One of them, Mr. Platt of New York, is a notorious professional corrupter of Legislatures—a man who in any European country, save perhaps Turkey, would have been in prison years ago. New York, by an almost unanimous vote of its Legislature, sends him to the United States Senate instead to "advise" Mr. McKinley upon the terms of his Treaties with England and other Powers. It is remarked of the present Senate by the New York "Nation" that it rushed at once to support Mr. Cleveland a year ago when it was thought he meant to threaten war over the Venezuelan boundary, but gives only slow and unfriendly consideration to his later message of peace between the nations. The next Senate, with Mr. Platt and others of his kidney in it, will reflect still less fairly the good sense and honour of the American public, and people of other countries will have to keep in mind more firmly than ever the fact that the Americans unfortunately are misrepresented by its stupid and mischievous Congress. But is it always to be like that?

THE EDUCATION BILL (1897).

PRIOR to the introduction of the Education Bill (1896) I was permitted to indicate to the readers of the "Saturday Review" (14 March, 1896) the reforms in the law which were needed in order to place non-Board—i.e. Voluntary—Schools in a state of efficiency. After the Bill was introduced it fell to my lot to show in what particulars it fell short of those necessary reforms, and to what extent it raised questions abruptly and prematurely, as to which public opinion was wholly uninformed and undecided ("Saturday Review," 18 April, 1896). These defects and the unpreparedness of public opinion led to an amount of debate upon the earlier clauses of the Bill which was fatal to its Parliamentary progress. The Bill was consequently withdrawn.

The Education Bill of 1897 is not open to the class of objections which proved fatal to its predecessor. It professes to deal with a part of the Education question which urgently demands treatment, and it deals only with questions upon which public opinion is ripe, which have been the subject of discussion for a considerable period of time, and upon which the judgment of the electorate has been unmistakably pronounced. The Bill also possesses a further characteristic which ought to smooth its progress through Parliament. Neither directly nor indirectly does it attack or injure School Boards. The only provision which directly affects the work of School Boards is the relief which is proffered to them as well as to the Managers of non-Board Schools by the abolition of the limit to the Education Grant, known as the 17s. 6d. limit.

Such being the negative characteristics of the Bill, the examination into its positive proposals may be entered upon without any prepossession or prejudice. With the single exception already mentioned, the scope of the Bill is limited to non-Board Schools. How far does it meet their claims to just treatment? It does not meet them fully. It is an instalment of justice, not the award of perfect equity. But it possesses, even in its imperfect shape, one distinguishing merit. The acceptance of the Bill as it stands will grant a new lease of life to non-Board Schools. When a patient is dying of hunger and its attendant diseases, the merit of that mode of treatment which keeps the patient alive pending the further deliberations of the doctors is too obvious for further comment. The policy of the Government is to keep the non-Board Schools alive pending the passage of further legislative reforms. The policy of the Opposition is to allow the patient to die by inches. When Sir Henry Fowler contemplates the number of non-Board Schools yet to be destroyed, he thinks it a matter of no moment, still less one for the expression of even verbal sympathy—and that would have cost him nothing—that only nineteen Church of England Schools were destroyed last year.

To keep non-Board Schools alive is the first principle of this Bill. It proposes to accomplish this aim in two ways. It provides for these schools a better form of organization, and it offers them a fraction of that financial help which must be given whenever Parliament has the courage to mete out equal justice to all public elementary schools whether they are Board Schools or not.

Any one who is familiar with the details of educational administration knows full well that it is essential to the permanent existence of non-Board Schools, as an integral part of the educational system, that they should be provided with a better form of organization than that which now exists. Each of the 14,500 non-Board Schools is a separate institution independent of all its fellows. Each is weak, because it is separate and isolated. And this weakness tells fatally against the system, when it is opposing the aggressiveness of the Education Department on the one hand or of School Boards on the other. Contrast with this separateness the solidarity of the School Board system. There are 5,260 Board Schools but only 2,587 School Boards. Each School Board on the average of the whole governs more than two separate schools. But when the theory of averages is abandoned, and the figures are examined in detail, it will be found that about 1,600 of these School Boards have each fewer than 200 children to care for. These are the village School Boards whose separate

existence few, if any, would care to preserve. It will be their fate eventually to be merged into wider areas, as it is the present necessity of the non-Board Schools to be merged into Associations or Federations.

The absolute value of, and necessity for, the association or federation of non-Board Schools may be easily understood from the case of London. The School Board for London governs 448 separate schools. Within the same area there are 388 Church of England, 93 Roman Catholic, 17 Wesleyan, 8 Jewish and 22 British Schools. Each of these 528 non-Board Schools is independently managed, and there is no body which is representative of even the five various classes into which they naturally fall. As independent bodies, each of the 528 corresponds with the Education Department on the one hand or with the School Board on the other.

It will be obvious to any man of business that to substitute five corresponding bodies for 528 must alone result in a large decrease of official routine and of its cost. But when, in addition to this, we take into account the further increase of efficiency which results from the strong helping the weak; from the diversion to the use of all of the services of experts in educational administration which are now only enjoyed by few; and from the fact that the interests of one become the interests of all; it is obvious that the gain to non-Board Schools as a system from the further development of the principle of Association and Federation will be immense.

In these circumstances it is a little difficult to understand the opposition which the Radical party appear determined to offer to the improvement of non-Board Schools by way of better organization. It is clear that it is not founded upon any political principle. How many of those who are now clamouring to keep the management of each non-Board School separate and distinct would apply the same principle to Board Schools? How many of them would advocate the splitting up of the School Board for London into 448 separate bodies, each having the full management of one Board School? It used to be said that the Radical party had at least one principle—namely, the unification of London. The Education Bill of 1896, which might have placed the London School Board under the dominion of the London County Council, carried by these proposals perplexity into the counsels of the Radical party. The absorption of the City into the unification of London might have been a delicate morsel; but the absorption of the School Board into the vitals of the London County Council gave the promise of an internal conflict of a serious and distressing character. The withdrawal of the Bill enabled the party to breathe freely once more, but their strange inclination to act in defiance of their creed dominates them still.

It must further be mentioned that the principle of Association and Federation has already been sanctioned by Parliament. It is contained in the 7th Section of the Elementary Education Act of 1891. Under the provisions of that clause "the managers of two or more public elementary schools in the same or neighbouring school districts" might "agree to associate and to elect a committee for the schools" and to have a common purse. The 17s. 6d. limit was, however, applied to each school in such association, in a more drastic form than that applicable to a separate school, and the latter part rendered the former part of the clause of no real utility. Still the principle has been assented to by the Radical party and has already legal force; and as the 17s. 6d. limit is to be abolished, its operation will to that extent be unimpeded. In these circumstances it is evident that any opposition to the Association clauses must proceed from some other motive than that of adherence to any declared Radical principle. It can only be accounted for upon the supposition that there exists somewhere amongst the Radical party and their few Unionist allies a determination to oppose any reform the effect of which can be shown to result in the increased stability and efficiency of the non-Board system of public elementary schools.

The real objection which might be forcibly urged against the Government proposals is that they do not go far enough. But, insufficient as they are, they yet contain an acknowledgment of the existing inequity of the Education Law and of educational administration,

together with proposals to modify that inequity to a perceptible extent. When it is remembered that the Association of Board Schools is compulsory for all purposes, the permissive Association of non-Board Schools, for some purposes, cannot be accepted as a final re-adjustment of educational administration. When Board Schools enjoy a revenue of public money of £4,000,000 annually in excess of the Government Grant distributed upon the basis of what is called "statutory equality" to all elementary schools, a sum of public money amounting to £618,000 can scarcely be deemed to be adequate for non-Board Schools. Non-Board Schools educate four out of every seven children attending public elementary schools; Board Schools instruct the remaining three. If the £4,618,000 of public money spent, and proposed to be spent, on the performance of this work were divided amongst the schools in proportion to the work done, non-Board Schools would receive not £618,000 but £2,638,000, and Board Schools would receive not £4,000,000 but £1,980,000. The Government proposals are clearly far short of fair and equal treatment, but they are an improvement upon the existing state of things. They are an instalment, but not the full measure, of justice. Yet it is a hopeful sign of advance, in the direction of equity, that such proposals should have emanated from the Government of the day, and that they should be supported in the House of Commons by a majority far in excess of that by which the Government was returned and is maintained in power. JOSEPH R. DIGGLE.

MADAME TUSSAUD'S.

TO plume oneself on a negative virtue is surely the cheapest form of self-righteousness, and I am not puffed up when I declare that I never was "one of those miserable males" who are ever seeking "sensations" and "experiences." Indeed, I have often suspected that these seekers are but the figment of certain philosophic brains. We all, naturally, have moments of boredom and the desire for diversion. In such a moment, yesterday, I myself did stray beyond the portal of a scarlet edifice in the Marylebone Road and did wander among wax-works. My visit may have been a "sensation" or an "experience," or both, but it was not at all nice. In future I shall stick to *ennui*.

What is it that pervades that congress of barren effigies? Why is the atmosphere so sinister, so subtly exhaustive? They say that, for all creatures, life ebbs lowest and death's meridian is in those chill, still intervals before the sun's relapse or resurrection, and I can well imagine that, likewise, no invalid, laid among those effigies, could survive for many minutes. They frightened me, I remember, when I was a little child and was taken to see them, as a treat. In a sense, they frightened me again, yesterday. But my fear, when I came among them, did not arise from any notion that they were real men and women, bewitched into an awful calm. I could not have cried to be taken home. I could not tear myself from their company. Powerless of escape, as in a dream, I must needs wander on, pausing before each one of those cadaverous and ignoble dolls, hating the tallowy faces and glass eyes that stared back at me, the rusty clothes, the smooth, nailless, little hands. I wished to Heaven I had never come into the place, yet must I needs stay there. The orchestra, playing lively tunes, did but intensify the gloom and horror of the exhibition. One would prefer no music in a sarcophagus. Why were they ranged here, these dolls? What fascination had they? They were not life-like. They gave me no illusion.

I remembered how Ouida, in one of her earlier books, had told us of one who came to the dim hall of some Florentine villa, and, gazing round at the pagan statues that were there, had fancied himself in the presence of the immortal gods, and had abased himself before them. Could any man, I wondered, entering Madame Tussaud's initial chamber, fancy that the old Kings and Queens of England had come to life? Mrs. Markham being his sole authority for most of their faces, he would not be hampered by any positive conceptions. For aught one knows, Richard Cœur de Lion may have had some such face as yonder person on the dais, and King

Stephen's image may be the image of King Stephen. But oh what stiff and inadequate absurdities! That fatuous puppet, called Mr. Gladstone, in the next room, is scarcely less convincing. And even when the familiar features of some man or woman have been moulded correctly, how little one cares, how futile it all seems! The figures are animated with no spark of life's semblance. Made in Man's image, they are as Man to God. Even from that elaborately set scene, representing a Drawing Room at the Court of St. James's, one can draw no possible illusion. It is true that the Royal personages, of whose models it is composed, are better subjects for ceraceous art than are any humbler folk. The high remoteness of their life tends to clear them of obvious vivacity, and these wax-works are apt travesties of faces whose Olympian calm is unmingled with Olympian contemplativeness. But even this crowd of models is a failure. See how each figure stands solitary! It is only those imperceptible nerve-currents, passing from one being to another, that create a homogeneous scene.

Though these wax-works are made in so close an imitation of life, they have, indeed, less verisimilitude than the outcome of any fine art. They are most nearly akin with statuary, I suppose, in that they are themselves a form of plastic art. But statuary, as Pater pointed out, in a pregnant (if rather uncouth) sentence, moves us to emotion, "not by accumulation of detail, but by abstracting from it." I think that wax-works fail, because they are not made within any of those "exquisite limitations" of colour, texture, proportion, to which all visual arts must be subjected. Life, save only through conventions, is inimitable. The more closely it be aped, the more futile and unreal its copy. Well! And herein, perhaps, lies the secret of that enervation, which wax-works do produce in many of their beholders. Good painting and good sculpture, inspire us with some illusion; thus compensating us for what were otherwise the fatigue of gazing at them. But the best wax-works can only be regarded as specimens of ingenuity, mysterious and elaborate, always abortive. One marvels not that Æneas wept when he saw Troy's fall frescoed on the walls of Carthage. But could Louis Napoleon, coming up from Chislehurst and visiting Madame Tussaud's, have turned away, from the presentment of his lost pomp, with so terrible a heart-cry as "*Quæ regio in terris nostri non plena laboris*"? I can hardly suppose that any one who ever saw his own wax-work did not feel mortified and sickened. I can imagine a man being haunted, for the rest of his life, by the knowledge that a ghastly double of himself is standing, all day long, over a number, to be gazed at and "looked out" in the catalogue—is standing there, all night long, in the dark. Is the condemned murderer, I wonder, ever appalled by the thought of his sure survival under Madame's roof? Does he ever think that, soon after he, poor wretch, has been slung down to eternity, another figure will be propped up in the Chamber of Horrors?

Such were the speculations that filled my brain, as I roamed morbidly around the exhibition. Though with every moment my vitality seemed to be ebbing lower and lower, though I cursed myself bitterly for being there, I could not tear myself from that gaunt hierarchy of tongueless orators, patriots without blood, and kings whose insignia are coloured glass. The unreality of everything oppressed me, in brain and body, with an indescribable lassitude. I felt dimly that the place was terrible, everything in it terrible. Life was a sacred thing—why had it been profaned here, for so many years? Whence came this hateful craft? With what tools, in what workshop, who, for whose pleasure, fashioned these awful images? Images? Yes, of course, they were images. . . . But why should Garibaldi and those others all stare at me so gravely? Had they some devil's power of their own, some mesmerism? It flashed upon me that, as I watched them, they were stealing my life from me, making me one of their own kind. My brain seemed to be shrinking, all the blood ceasing in my body. I would not watch them. I drooped my eyelids. My hands looked smooth, waxen, without nerves. I knew now that I should never speak nor hear again, never move.

I took a dull pride, even, in the thought that this was the very frock-coat in which I had been assassinated. . . . With an effort, I pulled myself together. Looking neither to the right nor to the left, I passed, through that morgue of upstanding corpses, to the entrance, down the marble staircase, out into the street. . . . Ah! It was good to be in the street!

MAX BEERBOHM.

HALF MEASURES WITH THE ARMY.

THE debates of the House of Commons have not of late been very brilliant, and I suspect that ordinary people pay less attention to them than was the practice a few years ago. Debates like that of Monday on the army are less than usually interesting, for the House of Commons itself cares nothing about them. When Sir Charles Dilke moved his amendment, I counted 48 members, mostly military men, on the Government side, and 28 on the opposite side of the House. When Sir Charles Dilke had finished many of these left their seats. The Government allowed the burden of defence to rest entirely in the hands of Mr. Brodrick, which would hardly have been done if there had been a feeling that Parliament and the country attached great importance to the subject and to the division which was to follow. Possibly, then, a short account of the controversy between the Cabinet and the unofficial members who are interested in the defence of the Empire may to many readers have the interest of novelty.

On 13 November Lord Lansdowne at Bristol delivered a most careful and lucid speech, explaining the principal deficiencies of the army. A weak point upon which he laid stress was "the condition of our home as compared with our foreign establishment." "Our army," he said, "is organized upon the assumption that for every battalion abroad there shall be another battalion at home. . . . But for a long time past we have been continually filching from the home establishment first one and then another battalion, until we have now no less than 11 battalions of infantry out of the country without their sister units at home." The consequence was that "at the very time when an extra flow of recruits is required to feed two battalions abroad instead of one, we have to resort to an expensive and unsatisfactory makeshift for training them till they are fit to go on foreign service. This is only one example of our tendency to do things by halves." This was a straightforward honest statement, but as its terms were a little vague and general, the unmilitary reader may be glad to know more precisely how the state of things described makes the army inefficient. During peace the principal function of an army is to train recruits and make them into soldiers. The operation is peculiar and differs from ordinary instruction. The recruit is not merely taught lessons which he has to remember, or given a skill in arms which he is expected to retain. He goes through a process of constraint put upon his will; for many months he finds himself compelled by orders, which, if disobeyed, will be supplemented by force, to do disagreeable things, of which the reason is not evident to him. This prolonged strait-waistcoat arrangement is as a rule painful, otherwise there would not be 5,000 desertions from the army every year. But after a certain time a change comes over the man. What was at first painful becomes pleasant; the reasons for the duties begin to dawn upon him; he becomes aware that he is a part of a living organism, and that the mighty maze is not without a plan. By that time he has become a soldier; he has acquired a new will, and is, in fact, a different man, and knows that he is a better man. To produce this internal change is the object of what is called discipline. In order that this operation—of spiritually "breaking in" the recruit—should be well performed certain conditions are essential. He must receive individual attention, and not be treated as a mere number or dummy, therefore there must be a proper proportion of instructors. The process must not be hurried, therefore he must remain long enough under the influence of those who first take him in hand; and it is very necessary that he should be influenced by example as well as by precept and command;

so that the body in which he finds himself must not be composed exclusively of recruits, but must have a good proportion of already disciplined men or formed soldiers. These conditions may be illustrated from two practical examples. Take first the brigade of Guards, which is thought a model training school. A battalion of the Foot Guards containing 744 rank and file digests about 120 recruits a year, and parts with no recruit till it has kept him three full years. The battalion has 42 sergeants, rather more than 1 to every 3 recruits, and 29 officers. A German infantry battalion under the three years' system used to take nearly one-third of its number of rank and file as recruits each year, and used to keep them three years all but a month or two. The mass was leavened by a small percentage of soldiers of more than three years' standing and by a percentage of men of liberal education. It was held to require the most perfect management and the entire time of the officers to train 30 or 33 per cent. of recruits in three years. When the two-years term was adopted the staff of officers and non-commissioned officers was increased. The British infantry of the line takes on an average about 22,100 recruits a year. These have to be trained exclusively by the home battalions, each of which, therefore, has to digest on an average 340 recruits per annum. The total rank-and-file of a home battalion is 721. It is, therefore, composed almost entirely of recruits in their first or second year. When the third year begins most of the recruits are already on their way to a battalion abroad. Thus the home battalion of the line has imposed upon it a task far more severe than that of a German battalion under the three years' system, and incomparably harder than that of a Guards battalion. The line battalion for its 340 recruits has thirty-eight sergeants (not quite one to every nine recruits) and twenty-four officers. There is hardly a perceptible leaven of trained soldiers, and this overworked and overstocked school is allowed to keep its pupils for only two years. Moreover, while the German recruit taken at twenty is a man, and can stand a little knocking about, the British line recruit is eighteen or under, and his frame is quite immature. In plain English, then, the home battalions have for some years been perpetually overworked; they have been called upon to do what is impossible—to make soldiers in less time than is possible except with a stronger staff and a good leaven of older fully disciplined men.

After Lord Lansdowne's speech at Bristol it was expected that there would be no more "half measures." The least that was looked for was the creation of 11 new home battalions. If this were done, the 22,100 recruits would then be distributed over 76 battalions, giving an average of 290 apiece. This would still be more than a third of the home battalions; but it would be a distinct relief. Lord Lansdowne proposes to readjust the balance of line battalions, so that there will be 69 at home, which leaves an average of 320 recruits for each, a trifling reduction on the present excessive number.

The arrangements proposed with the Guards will hardly relieve the line battalions, because the total number of annual recruits required by the line will not be materially affected. But the Guards will have to sacrifice from training the period spent by their battalions at Gibraltar, and the result will be that they will be compelled to reduce the number of men enlisted for three years in the ranks and nine in the Reserve, and to increase the number taken for seven years in the ranks and five in the Reserve. The change will not be popular among the classes that furnish the Guards with recruits.

Why has Lord Lansdowne after his Bristol speech returned to half measures? Undoubtedly because Sir Michael Hicks-Beach would not permit any addition to the annual Army Estimates. The Chancellor of the Exchequer declared at Bristol his intention in this matter, and it is evident that he has had his way. No one can blame him, for his function is to restrain expenditure. Lord Lansdowne, too, may have some excuse for allowing himself to be disciplined by Sir Michael Hicks-Beach into the adoption of a half measure. But what is inexplicable upon any but a most painful hypothesis is the statement made by Mr.

Brodrick as to the reasons why this half measure was adopted. Sir Charles Dilke asked whose was the proposal, and raised a doubt whether it was what Lord Wolseley wanted. That Lord Wolseley has accepted it is manifest, for if he had been unable to do so he must have resigned his office. But no one acquainted with the army doubts that Lord Wolseley would have preferred raising 11 new line battalions to any tampering with the Guards. Mr. Brodrick gave the House of Commons to understand that Lord Wolseley is perfectly satisfied, and that the half measure originated with the Army Board. The country is thus led to infer that the 11 battalions are refused and the Guards sacrificed because Lord Wolseley and his assistants believe that to be the very best possible remedy for the weakness of the army. Mr. Brodrick's words were guarded so as not to mislead those who know the facts, but if they were not intended to conceal the truth their selection was a most unfortunate coincidence. Mr. Brodrick, indeed, is most unlucky in his choice of words. He referred on Monday to "the 200 mobile guns in the hands of the Volunteer artillery," and having once allowed his mind to apply to guns of position, drawn by horses forbidden by regulation to go out of a walk, the term "mobile" (which when applied to artillery implies prolonged movement at a swift pace across rough country), he shortly proceeded to refer to the same guns as "field artillery." This description is about as accurate as would be that of the Volunteer battalions as "highly trained infantry."

The figures which I have given of the number of recruits taken annually for the infantry of the line—I have reached them by taking averages of the four years 1890-93—are, perhaps, worth considering in connexion with the number of battalions. They show, to my mind, that so long as the present drain on the army continues no satisfactory system of training can be devised on the basis of the present terms of service. The average number of men that leave the army in a year is 33,000, of whom 4,800 desert, 16,800 are passed into the Reserve, and 11,400 are discharged, mostly at the expiration of their twelve years. My own belief is that it would be better to enlist men for three years' colour service, to be followed by nine years either in the Reserve or with the colours abroad, according to the man's choice. The whole of the home battalions could then be managed on the three years' service system, which would give a better training than is possible at present. The battalions abroad would be kept up by men who had completed their three years' training at home and elected for a soldier's life.

These men should be guaranteed a furlough and passage home after each period of five or six years abroad, and deferred pay, instead of being used as a magnet to draw men out of the army, should be paid when due whether the men left the army or remained in it.

The only explanation that seems to me to account for the treatment of army questions by the Government and by Parliament is that neither the Cabinet nor the majority of members of Parliament believe that there will ever be another war in which this country can be concerned. If the army were intended for war the conditions I have tried to illustrate would not be allowed to continue. But if there can never be another war, it seems extravagant to keep an army at all, especially one that is admittedly the dearest in the world.

SPENSER WILKINSON.

AT THE CONCERT HALLS.

I CONGRATULATE the Philharmonic. It is devoted to the great cause of music in the Metropolis; and by arranging to give its concerts on what has long been regarded as Mr. Henschel's night, and thus taking away the best part of Mr. Henschel's band, it has deprived the Metropolis of concerts which, with all their faults, were vastly preferable to any the Philharmonic ever did or ever will give. When a Philharmonic concert was permitted to clash with one of Mr. Henschel's last year we all thought it an accident entirely attributable to the native boorishness of the Philharmonic mind. Now it almost seems as though the accident was no accident at all, but part of a deliberate policy. Whether this

proves to be the case or not, I must express my regret that Mr. Henschel should have permitted himself to be snuffed out by so poor a set of creatures as the Philharmonic directors. The incident will of course augment the popularity of our oldest orchestral society, and I trust the next subscription list will show that Mr. Henschel's sympathizers are able to make themselves felt. By the way, can any one tell me whether it is possible to get a copy of the Philharmonic accounts? The concerts are always well attended; and yet we never cease to hear about the poverty of the Philharmonic; and this is a mystery I wish to clear up by learning how the money is spent.

It appears that Queen's Hall is engaged this afternoon for some loftier function and Mr. Wood's third concert will not take place then, as I announced, but on the Saturday afternoon following; and further Mr. Newman considers the success of the two concerts already given sufficient to justify him in giving a fourth, devoted mainly to Wagner, on the afternoon of 27 February, which is also a Saturday, unless my arithmetic is weaker than usual. This does not cause me the slightest surprise; for the concerts are in many ways so excellent that even backward musical London would consider itself disgraced unless it supported them. The only weak point is the analytic programme, which makes one hunger for Mr. Joseph Bennett's lucubrations. Mr. Jacques formed his distinctive style by writing musical paragraphs for a defunct Society paper where the space at his disposal was strictly limited; but instead of improving now that he can spread himself over the "Musical Times and Singing Class Circular" he positively gets more and more crabbed every week. And he entertains strange convictions concerning the right use of inverted commas. He would say for instance: This is a "charming" composition, the "wind" in the second "section" having a "delightful" and "pleasing" "melody," while the "theme" given to the "trombones" in the "coda" is amazingly "strong." It is difficult to listen to Mr. Wood's fine playing in a proper spirit when one is filled with laughter at the peculiarities ("charity prompts mildness of epithet") of the programme lying on one's knee; and that so many of the audience succeed in doing it is a high compliment to Mr. Wood. Not for the life of me can I see the necessity of the analytic programme. A list of the themes would enable the audience to follow even a new composition, whereas the uninformed are simply mystified by the enigmatic utterances of a musical journalist who has nothing whatever to say, but must, absolutely must, earn a five-pound note somehow. Not only on the ground that Mr. Jacques's programmes in particular are ridiculous, but because the analytic programme in general serves no useful purpose, I advocate its complete suppression. Of the two concerts, the second, nearly entirely given over to Wagner, was very much the more interesting and exciting; though the orchestra played with greater refinement and finish at the first. I implied last week that the Unfinished symphony came off less satisfactorily than the smaller pieces; and to come down to detail, there were three faults noticeable in them and in the playing of Wagner on Saturday last. First, Mr. Wood, a martinet in nothing else, insists upon playing the martinet with the brass. He lets the violins swing along freely, so that they sing out full and fresh, with nothing stiff or cramped in their phrasing; and he gives the wood-wind a free hand to a degree that is only justified by the wonderfully delicate and rich tone they produce. But he seems afraid of the trumpets and trombones; he never lets them go their own way; he holds them firmly on the end of his stick; and, worst of all, he makes them play in deadly accurate time. Consequently they never sing; and instead of a full, noble and richly coloured tone, and dignified, elastic, and expressive phrasing, we get a tone that is always hard and often verges on the wiry, and phrasing that is stiff, awkward, angular, and often verges on the cast-iron. Those who attended the first Mottl concert given in this country can never forget the magnificence of the finish of the "Tannhäuser" overture, where Mottl let his brass play the melody in their own way and made the strings wait for them. Every note had time to speak clearly; and though the melody was as loud as could be wished, there was no harshness in the loudness; one never felt,

as one often feels with Mr. Wood, that the limit had been reached, and that one inch more of pressure would burst the instrument if not the player, but on the contrary, that each bandsman could play twice as loudly if he chose. In the Fire-music and the Valkyries' Ride Mottl got astounding power in precisely the same way: nay, only a few weeks ago, Mr. Wood himself, in the prelude to the third act of "Lohengrin," achieved a force and generous massiveness of tone in the brass that surprised me by letting his men loose on the composition instead of holding them too tight. When he learns how to do this always, and the necessity of doing it always, his conducting will be cured of its one serious fault. The others are trifling in comparison. The second is that he does not as a rule put sufficient body into the middle parts—a defect that need only be pointed out to be remedied; and the third that his playing wants clearness and cleanness: the parts are not sharply defined and the colours sometimes become muddy. Whether this is due to Mr. Wood not having had as yet sufficient practice on his instrument, or to his desire to get a general freedom of tone and breadth of phrasing, I cannot tell; but certainly the fault was plainly manifest in the "Meistersingers" overture, which sounded as though it was played on the further side of a thick veil, and in the funeral march from "The Dusk of the Gods," in which the tremendous rushing violin passages did not cut and tear as they should. Of course the excessive cleanness, lucidity and general neatness of Lamoureux are nearly as undesirable as the excessive muddle of the Philharmonic; but there is a medium to be attained, and just now Mr. Wood inclines rather to the Philharmonic way of doing things than to the Lamoureux way. These are all the objections I bring against Mr. Wood's conducting; and his faults are so few and so seldom felt, and his excellences so many and so frequently felt, that to dwell on the former seems a little unfair. I used to defend Mackenzie as a conductor against my friends on the ground that he was the only Englishman who knew how to handle the bâton; but that argument is useless and untrue now; for Mr. Wood is as much finer and more faithful an artist than Mackenzie as Mackenzie is better than all his fellow-Academics lumped together. There is no reason why Mr. Wood should not in the fulness of time rank with Lamoureux and Levi, if not actually with Richter and Mottl. And these orchestral concerts of his are, next to the Promenades, much the most useful and hopeful things going in music to-day. I hope the Philharmonic won't want his Saturday afternoon.

There is little to be said about Mr. Dolmetsch's concert of Friday, 5 February, not because the concert lacked interest, but because I have already said all I have to say about the old music and about Mr. Dolmetsch's manner of rendering it. As a matter of fact, in spite of the want of a singer, the concert was as agreeable as any yet given by Mr. Dolmetsch; for some numbers of a suite by Lully for harpsichord, and an "Invention Sesta" by some anonymous composer of the seventeenth century, lately discovered by Mr. Dolmetsch in Florence, were delightfully fresh and contained passages of real loveliness, and both were played with grace and sufficient force by Mrs. Elodie Dolmetsch. The great piece of the evening was of course Bach's second sonata for gamba and harpsichord, which wondrous composition was given by Miss Dolmetsch with delicious tone and all possible intensity of expression; and the great violin sonata in A, not long ago merrily romped through by Sarasate, was played by Mr. Dolmetsch with expression enough, but with technique so lame and stiff as to show that Mr. Dolmetsch needs practice. As for the composition for two virginals by Giles Farnaby, it was no better than Daniel Norcombe's divisions on a ground; and both pieces served to remind us that music is not necessarily good, as Mr. Dolmetsch appears to think, because it is old. If that were the case Mr. Dolmetsch will perceive that even our own Parry has an immortality prepared for him, which he will enter upon when some Dolmetsch of (say) the twenty-fifth century discovers in him a great and utterly forgotten composer. The fact is we are all apt to take too exclusively a literary interest in the old music; and after warning Mr. Dolmetsch not to let his audience do it I must warn

him not to do it himself, for, of course, from the literary point of view, it matters little whether a composition is fine or not so long as it is redolent of the century from which it comes. But in spite of such little lapses his concerts are most wonderful entertainments, and no one who would be thought genuinely musical can afford not to hear the Caccini songs sung there by Miss Mary Davies and Mr. Douglas Powell on 19 February, and the equally beautiful things to be done on 5 March. Besides, the astonishing new harpsichord, handsomely decorated by Miss Helen Coombe, may be seen there; and every one should observe how ingeniously Mr. Dolmetsch has solved a problem that baffled the great seventeenth and eighteenth century harpsichord makers.

It is some time since there were so many concerts worth attending in one week; and after treating of Messrs. Wood and Dolmetsch at such length the more important of the others can only be very briefly dealt with. Decidedly the best was Mr. Gompertz's quartet concert given in the small Queen's Hall on Wednesday evening. I have treated Mr. Gompertz and his men most shamefully this season, but hope to have space soon to expatiate at adequate length on their merits. For the present I can only say that we had Brahms's quartet in B flat (Op. 67), which is just worth hearing, and Beethoven's in F (Op. 135), which is worth going five hundred miles to hear. In the first Messrs. Gompertz, Haydn Inwards, Kreuz and Ould were not very excellent—for them; but the second went off with a vigour, richness, tenderness and finish that might make four archangelic interpreters of chamber-music envious. The singing made one think of a penny reading where the curate sings Rubinstein's duets with the vicar's eldest daughter. Mr. Gompertz must really forbid such doings at the concert he announces for Wednesday, 24 February, when the Tschakowsky quartet in E flat will be repeated and Beethoven's fugue, Op. 133, will be played. On the same evening—Wednesday last—the Royal Amateur Snobbish Society gave a concert in the large Queen's Hall. Judging from the little I heard of it even the fact that the name of his Highness of Saxe-Coburg is set down as principal violin does not prevent the Amateurs getting along fairly well; and, seeing that He does not play it is difficult to understand why His name should be there at all. Madame Fischer-Sobell played piano pieces by Rubinstein and Brahms in a fine broad style, showing that she possesses a firm yet liquid touch, a complete technique and a strength of intellectual grip rare amongst women pianists. Handel's "Susanna," interpreted with something of the Handel spirit by the Handel Society at the People's Palace last Saturday night, must be left until some more favourable day; but I must mention that at the Sunday evening concert of 7 February in the small Queen's Hall Mozart's divine quartet in D minor (with the unspeakably tender Andante) was played in a way which showed that only time is needed for Mr. Arbos and his colleagues to rival Mr. Gompertz and his colleagues as the finest quartet players in London. And if Mr. Newman keeps pegging away the public will doubtless learn that the Sunday evening concerts are worth going to. But, bearing in mind that the average Englishman has learnt to regard Sunday as a day to be got through cheaply—viz. at a cost of threepence for the collection in the morning and a penny for the same in the evening—it might be worth considering whether the Hall would not sooner be regularly filled if the prices were reduced to two shillings for the front seats and one shilling for the back. Five shillings is cheap on a Saturday; but dear on Sunday. Besides, five shillings is all Mr. Newman charges for the best seats at the Promenades on Saturday nights; and the three-shilling seats are rather better. J. F. R.

MR. WILSON BARRETT AS THE MESSIAH.

"The Daughters of Babylon." A Play in four acts, by Wilson Barrett. Lyric Theatre, 6 February, 1897.

MR. WILSON BARRETT, responding to the editor of the "Academy," has just declared that his favourite books in 1896 were the Bible and Shakespeare. No less might have been expected from a manager who

has combined piety with business so successfully as the author of "The Sign of the Cross." Isaiah has especially taken hold of his imagination. No doubt when he read, "Yea, they are greedy dogs which can never have enough; and they are shepherds that cannot understand: they all look to their own way, every one for his gain, from his quarter," he recognized in Isaiah the makings of a first-rate dramatic critic. But what touched him most was the familiar "He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young." If Mr. Barrett had been a musician, like Handel, he would have wanted to set that text to music. Being an actor, he "saw himself in the part," and could not rest until he had gathered a lamb with his arm and carried it on to the stage in "The Daughters of Babylon." The imagined effect was not quite realized on the first night, partly, no doubt, because Mr. Edward Jones, the conductor of the band, omitted to accompany the entry with the obvious Handel theme, and perhaps partly because the lamb proved unworthy of the confidence placed by Mr. Barrett in its good manners. But the strongest reason was that metaphor is not drama, nor *tableau vivant* acting. I hold Mr. Wilson Barrett in high esteem as a stage manager and actor; and I have no doubt that Mr. Wilson Barrett would allow that I am a fairly competent workman with my pen. But when he takes up the tools of my craft and tries his hand at dramatic literature, he produces exactly the same effect on me as I should produce on him if I were to try my hand at playing Othello. A man cannot be everything. To write in any style at all requires a good many years practice: to write in the Scriptural style well enough to be able to incorporate actual passages from the Authorized Version of the Bible without producing the effect of patching a shabby pair of trousers with snippets of fifteenth-century Venetian brocade, requires not only literary skill of the most expert kind, but a special technical gift, such as Stevenson had, for imitating the turn of classical styles.

Mr. Wilson Barrett is here fairly entitled to interrupt me by saying, "Do not waste your time in telling me what I know already. I grant it all. But I have reverently submitted my qualifications to expert opinion. Miss Marie Corelli, the most famous writer of the day, whose prodigious success has earned her the envious hate of the poor journeymen of literature to whom she will not even deign to send review copies of her books, tells me that I have 'the unpurchasable gift of genius'; that my language is 'choice and scholarly'; that I 'could win the laurels of the poet had I not opted for those of the dramatist'; that I have power and passion, orchidacy and flamboyancy; and that my 'Babylon' is better than 'The Sign of the Cross,' which was not only enormously successful, but was approved by the clerical profession, to whom Greek and Hebrew are as mother tongues. Who are you, pray, Mr. Saturday Reviewer, that I should set this mass of disinterested authority beneath your possibly envious disparagements?"

This is altogether unanswerable as far as the weight of authority is concerned. I confess that I am in an infinitesimal minority, and that my motives are by no means above suspicion. Therefore I must either hold my tongue or else rewrite the play to show how it ought to be done. Such a demonstration is beyond my means, unless a public subscription be raised to remunerate my toil; but I do not mind giving a sample or two. Suppose I were to tell Mr. Wilson Barrett that among the many judicial utterances in the Bible, by Solomon, Festus, Felix, Pilate, and others, I had found such a remark as "The evidence against thee is but slight," would he not burst out laughing at me for my ridiculous mixture of modern Old Bailey English with the obsolete fashion of using the second person singular? Yet he has used that very phrase in "The Daughters of Babylon." Pray observe that I should not at all object to the wording of the whole drama in the most modern vernacular, even if it were carried to the extent of making the Babylonian idol seller talk like a coster. But modern vernacular seasoned with thees and thous and haths and whithers to make it sound

peradventurously archaic is another matter. Let us have "There is not sufficient evidence against you," or else let us talk loftily of accusation and testimony, not of cases and evidence. Again, there is not, as far as I can remember, any account of an auction in the Bible; but if there were I should unhesitatingly reject it as apocryphal if one of the parties, instead of saying "Who is he that biddeth against me for this woman?" were to exclaim, "I demand to know the name of my opponent," which is Mr. Barrett's authorized version. If he had made Jediah say, "May I ask who the gentleman is?" that would have been perfectly allowable; but the phrase as it stands belongs neither to Christy's nor to the literary convention of the ideal Babylon: it is the ineptitude of an amateur. And would it not have been easier to write "The nether milestone is not so hard," than "The nether milestone is *tender in comparison*"? As to "We have wandered from the object of our visit, my lord," I really give it up in despair, and intemperately affirm that the man who, with a dozen tolerably congruous locutions ready to his hand, could select that absurdly incongruous one, does not know the Bible from "Bow Bells."

Miss Marie Corelli, who finds Mr. Barrett's phrases "choice and scholarly," gets over the difficulty of describing Ishtar in the blunt language of Scripture, by calling her, very choicely, "the Queen of the Half World of Babylon"—five words for one. Ishtar is very bitter throughout the play concerning the ferocity of the Jewish law to women. Yet we find Lemuel, the true spirit of a British tar, saying, "I will not harm thee, who art—whate'er thy sins—a Woman." I could not give a better example of the way in which the actor-dramatist will forget everything else, drama, common-sense, and all, the moment an opening for some hackneyed stage effect, chivalrous pose, or sympathy-catching platitudes occurs to him.

"The Daughters of Babylon," then, is not likely to please critics who can write; for nothing antagonizes a good workman so much as bad workmanship in his own craft. It will encounter also a prejudice against his exploitation of the conception of religious art held by the average English citizen. Against that prejudice, however, I am prepared to defend it warmly. I cannot for the life of me understand why Mr. Wilson Barrett should not do what Ary Scheffer and Müller, Sir Noel Paton and Mr. Goodall, Mr. Herbert Schmalz and the publishers of the Doré Bible, not to mention Miss Corelli herself, are doing, or have been doing, all through the century without protest. For my part, whilst, as a Superior Person, I reserve the right to look down on such conceptions of religion as Caesar might have looked down at a toy soldier, yet the advance from the exploitation of illiterate and foolish melodramatic conventions in which nobody believes, to that of a sentiment which is a living contemporary reality, and which identifies the stage at last with popular artistic, literary and musical culture (such as it is), is to me more momentous than the production of "John Gabriel Borkman" at the Lyceum would be. Mr. Wilson Barrett has found that he can always bring down the house with a hymn: the first act of "The Daughters of Babylon," after driving the audience nearly to melancholy madness by its dullness, is triumphantly saved in that way. Well, any one who takes a walk round London on Sunday evening will find, at innumerable street corners, little bands of thoroughly respectable citizens, with their wives and daughters, standing in a circle and singing hymns. It is not a fashionable thing to do—not even a conventional thing to do: they do it because they believe in it. And pray why is that part of their lives not to find expression in dramatic art as it finds expression, unchallenged, in all the other fine arts? Are we to drive Mr. Wilson Barrett back from his texts, his plagal cadences, and his stage pictures from the Illustrated Bible, to "Arrest that man: he is a murderer," or "Release that man: he is in-know-scent," or "Richard Dastardson: you shall re-pent-er that-er ber-low"? The pity is that Mr. Wilson Barrett does not go further and gratify his very evident desire to impersonate the Messiah without any sort of circumlocution or disguise. That we shall have Passion Plays in the London

theatres as surely as we shall some day have "Parsifal" has for a long time past been as certain as any development under the sun can be; and the sooner the better. I have travelled all the way to Ober Ammergau to see a Passion Play which was financed in the usual manner by a syndicate of Viennese Jews. Why should not the people who cannot go so far have a Passion Play performed for them in Shaftesbury Avenue? The fact that they want it is proved, I take it, by the success of "Barabbas." Depend on it, we shall see Mr. Wilson Barrett crucified yet; and the effect will be, not to debase religion, but to elevate the theatre, which has hitherto been allowed to ridicule religion but not to celebrate it, just as it has been allowed to jest indecently with sex questions but not to treat them seriously.

As it is, "The Daughters of Babylon" suffers a good deal from our religious prudery. Mr. Wilson Barrett underplays his part to an extent quite unaccountable on the face of it, the fact being that he plays, not Lemuel, but the Messiah disguised as Lemuel, and therefore excludes all fear, passion and perplexity from his conception, retaining only moral indignation for strong effects, and falling back at other times on superhuman serenity, indulgence, pity and prophetic sadness. In short, he is playing a part which he did not venture to write; and the result is that the part he did write is sacrificed without any apparent compensation. It is dangerous for an actor to mean one part whilst playing another, unless the audience is thoroughly in the secret; and it is quite fatal for an author to mean one play and write another. There was no such want of directness in "The Sign of the Cross." In it the Christian scenes were as straightforward as the Roman ones; and Marcus Superbus was meant for Marcus Superbus and nobody else. In "The Daughters of Babylon" the Jewish scenes are symbolic; and though the Babylonian scenes are straightforward enough (and therefore much more effective), they are pervaded by the symbolic Lemuel, who lets them down dramatically every time he enters. With this double-mindedness of purpose at the heart of it, the play may succeed as a spectacle and a rite; but it will not succeed as a melodrama.

Like all plays under Mr. Barrett's management, "The Daughters of Babylon" is excellently produced. The scene painters are the heroes of the occasion. Mr. Telbin's grove standing among the cornfields on a hilly plain, and Mr. Hann's view of Babylon by night, in the Doré style, are specially effective; and the tents of Israel on the hillside make a pretty bit of landscape in Mr. Ryan's "Judgment Seat by the City of Zoar," in which, however, the necessity for making the judgment seat "practicable" left it impossible for the artist to do quite as much as Mr. Telbin. The cast, consisting of thirty-three persons, all of them encouraged and worked up as if they were principals—a feature for which Mr. Wilson Barrett, as manager, can hardly have too much credit—must be content for the most part with a general compliment, the names being too many for mention. Mr. Franklin McLeay's Jediah bears traces of the epilepsy of Nero, an inevitable consequence of a whole year's run of convulsions; but he again makes his mark as an actor of exceptional interest and promise, who should be seen in a part sufficiently like himself to be played without the somewhat violent disguises he assumes at the Lyric. Mr. Ambrose Manning, as Alorus the Affable, has the only one of the long parts which is not occasionally tedious, a result largely due to his judgment in completely throwing over the stagy style which all the rest frankly adopt. Mr. Charles Hudson also contrives to emerge into some sort of particularity; but the other sixteen gentlemen defy distinction, except, perhaps, the fat Babylonian executioner, Mr. George Bernage, whose comfortable appearance is so little suited to his occupation as chief baker at the Nebuchadnezzaresque fiery furnace that his fearsome utterances provoke roars of laughter. Miss Maud Jeffries appears to much advantage in rational dress in the Babylonian scenes. She makes Elna much more interesting than that whitened wall the Christian Martyr in "The Sign of the Cross," and seems to have the American intelligence, character and humour, without the American lack of vitality. Indeed,

her appearance in the first scene of the second act is the beginning of the play, as far as any dramatic thrill is concerned. Miss Lily Hanbury, specially engaged to be orchidaceous and flamboyant as the Improper Person of Babylon, and wholly guiltless of the least aptitude for the part, honestly gives as much physical energy to the delivery of the lines as she can, and is very like a pet lamb pretending to be a lioness. When Lemuel decided to let his sweetheart, himself, and all his faithful confederates be baked in the fiery furnace sooner than accept her proffered affection, the sympathy of the audience departed from him for ever. So did mine; but, all the same, I beg Miss Hanbury not to imagine, whatever the gallery may think, that she has learnt to act heavy parts merely because she has picked up the mere mechanics of ranting. And I implore her not to talk about "the lor of Babylon." The quarter-century during which Sir Henry Irving has been attacking his initial vowels with a more than German scrupulousness should surely by this time have made it possible for a leading actress to pronounce two consecutive vowels without putting an "r" between them.

The musical arrangements are so lavish as to include a performance of Max Bruch's "Kol Nidrei" (familiar as a violoncello piece) between the first and second acts, by a Dutch solo violinist of distinction, M. Henri Seiffert. G. B. S.

MONEY MATTERS.

THE Bank of England Return this week shows an increase of £615,000 in the amount of the Reserve, and of 1 per cent. in the proportion to liabilities—from 52½ to 53½ per cent. But the time has hardly yet come for a further reduction in the Bank rate, though at the moment it looks as if such a change were not far distant, when call money is quoted 1 per cent., short loans about 1½, and the best three months' paper about 1½.

For information as to the factors influencing markets during the week our readers cannot do better than refer to the columns in which the political developments and political scares are dealt with. Events move rapidly, and possibly ere these lines appear in print some sensational development may have taken place. At the time of writing professional operators are holding aloof from extensive operations in any direction pending the outcome of the semi-belligerent attitude reported on the part of the Greek Government. The barometer of the market has been the fluctuations in international, and the Paris Bourse has been watched with particular interest. Consequently, special significance has been attached to the sales from that quarter of Turkish Bonds, De Beers shares, Brazilians, Rio Tintos, and Copper shares in general.

In the Home Railway Market there has been rather a severe collapse. Here, again, political influences have been strong, though not so predominant as elsewhere. Prior to the dividend announcements for the half-year everybody was sanguine, and the result was the creation of a rather heavy bull account. The dividends were hardly up to expectation, and the bulls were therefore disposed to take their profits hastily. This, combined with the sensitive condition of markets generally, gave the bears an opportunity of which they were not slow to avail themselves. Some Home Railway stocks under these circumstances look distinctly cheap for the *bona-fide* purchaser who can afford to wait. We may cite Great Northern Deferred as an instance. The closing price on Thursday was 59½.

While, on the whole, the making-up prices at the Settlement this week are disappointing to speculative purchasers and to holders, there are not wanting indications that much of the set-back is due to bulls taking their profits and to bear sales. It was noticed during the arrangement of the account that a large amount of Chatham Ordinary was being taken up; and the continuation rate actually became a backwardation before the account was fully adjusted. The same thing was to be seen in various other departments, such as Argentine Railways, in some of which there was

marked scarcity of stock, Central Argentine in particular being taken off the market to a much greater extent than the bears of that stock expected or liked.

Political troubles in South Africa, in the near East, and in Egypt have given pause to the improvement in trade during recent months; and the Board of Trade Returns for January are not encouraging. The "Times" says that "at first sight" they appear to be somewhat disappointing, but adds that it must be borne in mind that the past month was one of twenty-six working days, and that January 1896 had twenty-seven. Allowing for that it was not very pleasant to find on comparing the exports for the two months a decrease of 6.5 per cent. in our exports. The difference of a day accounts for only about 4 per cent. The imports, it is true, have gone up; but it is not consoling to see an increase of these going on concurrently with a decrease in exports. Even "at second sight" the Returns are not brilliant.

The Kaffir market presents no feature calling for special comment. Everybody is awaiting developments, especially as regards the amount of indemnity to the Transvaal Government in respect to the Jameson Raid. A Reuter telegram published on Thursday said that the Transvaal Executive had concluded its deliberations on this subject, and that, while no official statement had yet been made regarding the amount, one paper had given it as £1,100,000. On the afternoon of the same day the Transvaal Executive had arrived, by some occult means, at the conclusion that the amount was £185,000, but a few sceptics cynically inquired what were the odd shillings and pence. The one estimate is just as likely to be correct as the other.

We are rather surprised that there was not more curiosity displayed at the joint meetings of the London and Globe and West Australian Exploring and Finance Corporations regarding their relations with the London and Paris Corporation. These relations are generally understood to be somewhat strained, and it was expected that the question would come prominently forward. It would be a relief to the market mind if the matter were set at rest, for this and one or two other doubtful questions, such as the Lady Hampton affair, are exercising an unfortunately deterrent influence on the flow of capital towards undoubtedly rich gold fields. The Westralian market, under existing conditions, is almost stagnant, and there is not a single feature of importance therein to record for the week. Meantime, it is pleasing to see that, in spite of the absence of active business, prices are keeping wonderfully firm, all things considered.

In an address to a special meeting of the London Chamber of Commerce, Mr. Balfour Browne, Q.C., made the suggestion that, short of the acquisition of all railways by the State, an experiment might be made in the shape of the purchase of the railway Companies which do not pay, and have not paid, any dividend upon their ordinary stock for some years. These lines, Mr. Balfour Browne thought, might be purchased at a price which would put no great burden upon the taxpayer, and the State competition thus created would introduce a wholesome element into the railway world, and make the other railways of the country so conduct their business towards trade as to make the purchase of the whole of the railways in the country a matter which might be indefinitely postponed. What a charming suggestion from an eminent Q.C.!—Let the State buy up the poorer Companies for the express purpose of blackmailing the successful ones. How would Mr. Balfour Browne like to see the same principle applied to his own profession? Suppose it were suggested that the Treasury should buy up the practices of all the barristers earning only small incomes in order that it might compel Q.C.'s to reduce their fees—would Mr. Balfour Browne back up such a proposal?

For wholesale vituperation commend us to "The Investors' Review." Writing about the recent disclosures concerning the Queensland National Bank, Mr. Wilson starts off blithely with the heading, "The

Queensland National Bank Swindle," and in the second sentence of the article tells us that after what has come to light regarding the bank, neither the Government of Queensland nor its people are to be trusted with money. A little later, referring to the indebtedness of the bank to the Government, he says that "not 5s. in the £1 of this money could be paid back if the rotten carcass went into straight, square liquidation, and very little of it is likely to be repaid in any event, except at other people's expense." To appreciate the report of the Investigation Committee, the editor of "The Investors' Review" says that "a dictionary of euphemisms is, perhaps, wanted to enable one to enter fully into the enjoyment of its delicate phraseology." In this article, as in others, our contemporary shows the want of such a dictionary; but an inspection of its file would afford first-class material for the compilation of a "Dictionary of Vituperation." But, while the language used is rather too violent and somewhat redolent of Billingsgate, we must say that the circumstances commented upon do undoubtedly constitute a very grave scandal and a gross injustice to the British investors who have sunk millions in this ill-fated institution.

A curious instance of the contrast between voting at Company meetings by a show of hands and by a poll was afforded at the London Road Car Company's meeting this week. The question was as to whether or not the directors' remuneration should be increased as a recognition of the work they had done in bringing the Company to its present satisfactory position. On a show of hands, the resolution was defeated; but when a poll was demanded and taken the result was that for the resolution there voted, in person or by proxy, 269 shareholders, holding 12,892 shares; while against it there were only seven shareholders, holding 155 shares.

It is difficult to ascertain exactly what is going on regarding the Lady Hampton case, but day by day it becomes more interesting. In its latest phase the discussion appears to turn on the precise legal interpretation of the terms of the undertaking given as to buying in. The results of the latest move in the game will not be available before we go to press; but the case is one which we should recommend our readers to follow carefully from the reports in our daily contemporaries. We must reserve any comments we may wish to make until the matter has ceased to be *sub judice*.

Linotype shares, to which we referred last week, have continued active, and the market has been a strong one. When we then wrote the price was 7½. The price has since risen to 8½. Another lively stock has been Allsopp's Ordinary, the fluctuations in which are based upon forecasts of the dividend announcement which is looked for on Friday next. Last Wednesday the price was as high as 174, but the closing price on Thursday was only 171½. We cannot say that any definite forecast obtains credence in the market. The estimates vary between 6 and 8 per cent.

The name of Mr. Frank May, late Chief Cashier of the Bank of England, whose death occurred last Monday, was well known all over the world, as was his signature on the Bank's notes. It was in November 1893 that Mr. May retired from his position in the Bank of England under circumstances which it would serve no purpose to recall, and which are matters of common knowledge. Those who had occasion to come in contact with him will remember with pleasure the invariable courtesy of Mr. May in his official capacity—a courtesy which made and left him many friends who regret his decease, while deploring the circumstances alluded to.

Our monthly Trade Returns are so exhaustive and so useful that we should like to see them still more exhaustive in order that they might thereby be rendered still more useful. To say nothing of its arbitrariness, the existing arrangement of the countries from which we import and to which we export commodities has, for the most part, stood for years, and we submit—with all possible

deference to the sapient gentlemen who produce the Returns—that it is sadly in need of revision. There is too wholesale a grouping of goods and values under the comprehensive but unsatisfactory heading of "Other Countries." For instance, last year we received from "Other Countries" 118,659 cwts. of bacon, and from Germany only 512 cwts. Now, we suggest that, if the returns cannot be expanded, Germany might be included in the miscellaneous sources of supply, and its place be taken by the principal one of the "Other Countries." From "Other Countries" we last year imported 585,056 cwts. of fresh beef. It would be of service to many of us if the several sources were enumerated. This is an important trade, and the only country now specified in connection with it is the United States. The same remarks apply, *mutato nomine*, to salted pork, lard, potatoes, rice, iron ore, lead, and several others.

We should be thankful, moreover, to learn whence we derived the 18,600,000 bushels of raw fruit imported in 1896. Of refined sugar we received from the United States 9,603 cwts., and from "Other Countries" 608,515 cwts.; of raw sugar, from the Spanish West Indies 20,160 cwts. and from "Other Countries" 1,209,644 cwts.; of coffee, from Ceylon 14,428 cwts. and from "Other Countries" 348,350 cwts. Does all our petroleum come from America or does South Russia take a share? You must not go to the Board of Trade Returns if you want to find out, because they cannot enlighten you. Most of us know where jute comes from, and some among us even know the usual places of origin of the woollen rags which are brought into the country in order to be made up into cheap and nasty shoddy by the "first aid" of the "devils" of Dewsbury; but in the matter of raw silk we pine for completer knowledge, because we of the "Saturday Review" are interested in the British silk trade.

We have no space to-day to refer to the shortcomings of the export section of the Returns. The most unsatisfactory part of the whole document is that which pretends to enumerate the imports of manufactured articles. We are the leading manufacturers of the world, take it all round, and it would be interesting—possibly valuable—to see at a glance what countries are sending their productions to us. In 1896 we imported cotton goods to the value of £3,521,034; 20,069,122 lb. of linen yarn, value £779,641; 2,251,250 cwts. of glass and glass manufactures, value £2,346,554; 939,848 lb. of straw hats and bonnets, value £186,945; in addition to 11,671,822 lb. of straw plaiting, value £911,809, for making up into hats and bonnets; 4,040,902 cwts. of paper and straw boards, value £3,140,634; silks, value £16,707,103; woollens, value £9,704,608; and woollen yarn, value £1,820,657—among other things, of course, which we cannot find room to name. It may be sheer effrontery on our part, but we contend that we are entitled to know what are the countries that contribute, and in what varying proportions they do contribute, to these astounding totals. The quarterly annex to the regular Returns does not help us, for it gives only the total values of our import and export trade with the countries of the world during a given three months. In the case of paper, woollens, and silk, two or three countries are expressly named; but even in regard to these, our esteemed friend the "Other Countries" shows himself. The annual abstract goes further, but not by any means all the way. Besides, we object to wait for eighteen months for information which might be supplied every month. It would necessitate only a little more work on the part of the compilers, and by a more economical rearrangement of space the addition of no more than two pages—which would facilitate the making up of the whole Return. But perhaps the underpaid compilers are already overworked? We beg pardon—we confess that this view had not occurred to us.

NEW ISSUES, &c.

The latest Anglo-French enterprise in which the public have been requested to participate is a Pneumatic Compensation Cycle Company. The prospectus has been issued simultaneously in England and France, so

that no national jealousy can be aroused on that score. The board of directors has also been studiously arranged so that both nationalities are represented thereon. The Anglo-French Pneumatic Compensation Cycle Company has been formed for the purpose of acquiring the Patent Rights for France and Belgium of Webb's Patent Pneumatic Compensation Cycle, together with "the splendid new Works at St. Cloud, Paris." It is a most wonderful invention, according to the prospectus, the special features being no puncturing and no vibration, while side-slipping is reduced to a minimum. It is not, however, very clear as to how the pneumatic principle is applied. If the promoters had only been a little more descriptive on this point, instead of throwing discredit on pneumatic-tyred machines now in use, it might have rendered them greater assistance in floating the undertaking. There have been many wonderful inventions of late in cycles, but somehow or other they do not seem to revolutionize the industry as might have been expected on a perusal of the various prospectuses.

ADVICE TO INVESTORS.

JUNIOR CARLTON.—It seems likely that a fair dividend will be declared ere long, but the shares are not of the class that we should recommend as a permanent investment.

A. B. (Poplar).—The rumour, we should think, is not unlikely. We do not think the Founders' shares are very desirable holdings, whether it is true or not.

W. H. COOKE.—We see no reason to advise you to sell the shares, which appear to be a very fair investment of their class.

TRANSVAAL.—We are making inquiries, and shall send you the information by post.

CORRESPONDENCE.

ACCURACY AND THE "SPECTATOR."

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

LISBON, 18 January, 1897.

SIR,—In an article in the "Spectator" of 9 January, entitled "The Command before Khartoum," the following extraordinary and misleading statement is made: "It is too true (is it not?) that a man of military genius has but little chance in the British army unless he is royal or a great aristocrat," &c.

Now a reference to the "Army List" will show that, with three exceptions, not a single high appointment either in Great Britain or India is held by officers who can be said in any way to belong to the aristocracy, or to possess any aristocratic family interest. With these three exceptions, all, from the Commander-in-Chief downwards, are self-made men.—Yours faithfully,

MILES.

ARMS AND THE SNOB.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

SIR,—I am obliged to "R." for his letter and the opportunity he has afforded me of establishing my point. Any one referring to the "Genealogist" will see that the correspondence therein arose concerning a pedigree published twelve years previously in the "History of Thame." The pedigree was an amateur pedigree compiled by an amateur, and published by an amateur, and with its compilation, verification, or publication the College of Arms had nothing whatever to do.

Mr. Lee's quoted remarks obviously do not refer to this pedigree, to which your correspondent makes them apply, but entirely to the identity of one individual mentioned therein. Any one as conversant with the methods of the College as I am must be well aware that many points in an alleged descent pending before the College are often "found proved," though the whole descent may eventually be rejected. But with regard to the crucial point of "R.'s" letter I have assured myself that no pedigree whatsoever—or portion of a pedigree—of the Lees of Pocklington is, or has ever been, recorded in the College of Arms, and none of the Lees of Quarrendon of later date than about 120 years ago, and, further, that the rightful arms of Mr. Lee and his family differ considerably from those of the latter family.—Yours truly,

X.

REVIEWS.

THE INDIAN PROBLEM.

"Backwards or Forwards." Indian Problems, No. III.
By Colonel H. B. Hanna. London: Archibald
Constable & Co.

THIS is the third of a series of essays in which the author has successively discussed the possibility of an invasion of India by Russia, the scientific frontier, and the cost to India of a forward policy, the momentum of which increases as it proceeds. These problems are all of the highest interest and importance; they dominate our foreign policy both in Europe and Asia; while, for our Indian Empire, their proper interpretation and decision involve the gravest issues of prosperity and safety, bankruptcy and ruin. We do not suppose that many of the readers of Colonel Hanna's books will altogether agree in the conclusions at which he has arrived. In all there is a tendency to exaggerate the dangers of the policy to which he is opposed and to make light of the opinions of a large number of capable and experienced men who have elevated Russophobia into a religion and have considered the material prosperity of India of secondary importance to the strategic defence of the North-West Frontier. But, although Colonel Hanna weakens the force of his argument by some exaggeration, he builds on a sound foundation; the policy which he advocates has been urged on many occasions by this journal; and it is becoming not only familiar but acceptable to a large number of Englishmen who are quite sufficiently instructed in the general problems of Eastern politics to be able to decide rightly when the main issues are fairly placed before them.

It may be stated generally, but without pressing the point too closely, that the policy of India should be one of peace. The country, which would be extremely wealthy if the Government were able to develop its great natural resources, is so over-populated that a mounting wave of poverty is ever threatening, as in the present famine, to destroy its prosperity. Civilization, security and sanitation have so reduced the death rate that the Government can only mitigate the evil created by its own beneficence by devoting the whole of its surplus revenue to agricultural and industrial development. Scientific frontiers and similar fancies of military theorists like Sir Pomeroy Colley are luxuries which a wise Government should eschew. But the Government of India is essentially a military Government, and soldiers have too large a control over its counsels. It is a mistake to permit the Commander-in-Chief to be a permanent member of the Council of the Viceroy, which in practice he invariably is, although an extraordinary one. When the Commander-in-Chief is supported by the authority of the ordinary military member of Council, it is difficult for even the strongest Viceroy to resist the united opinion of these military experts, and, as often happens, the strongest Viceroy may himself be ambitious of adding new provinces to an Empire which is already sufficiently vast. The result is extravagant military expenditure, the costly defence of positions which can never be attacked, the throwing away of millions of treasure in an expedition like that of Chitral, to annex a worthless valley and to extricate a garrison which should never have been isolated, in defiance of all the teachings of experience.

Russia, which looms like a thundercloud over Europe, is the cause of and the excuse for the vast outlay on the North-West Frontier which is draining the very life-blood of India. Let it be admitted that sound statesmanship would insist on reasonable preparations for defence against a danger, however unlikely and remote, yet these preparations should not be such as to compromise the far more important work of the peaceful development of India. If we cannot afford both, let us determine to hold our hand: to refuse to construct military lines of railway into a wilderness of mountains or to build forts which we cannot relieve without an army, and let us await what fortune may send us, with arms in our hands and ready to defend to the last the incomparable defensive position which Nature has already provided for us in the wide barrier of desolate mountains which shut in the Indian Paradise. The

question whether the successful invasion of India by Russia is possible is one of casuistry, and is not likely to be put to the test of experiment during the present generation. We all know the vapouring of that fine soldier, General Skobelev, but he changed his opinion as to the feasibility of the excursion before his death. Another gallant soldier, Sir Charles Macgregor, drew up a report in great detail on the invasion of India by Russia, in which all the wild theories and statistics which had led Skobelev astray were repeated and magnified. Never was a greater farrago of nonsense published than this book, which has ever since weighed like a nightmare on the Military Department of the Indian Government. As a fighter General Macgregor was second to none; as a politician his views are entitled to no respect. The question of invasion cannot be discussed here, and I would only say that a campaign by Russia against England in India would be as hazardous, and as likely to end in an overwhelming disaster, as that of Napoleon against Russia in 1812. If England, with what I have termed an incomparable defensive position, garrisoned by the finest troops in the world and with supreme command of the sea, cannot hold India against such Russian troops as could be brought against her, she is unworthy of her past reputation and the record of her army in every part of the world. I see nothing in the modern history of England to warrant such a supposition.

It is pleasing to observe, both in the speeches of the leaders of English opinion and in the Press, a growing belief that the true policy of this country is to abandon the jealous and suspicious attitude which has been so long maintained with regard to Russia, and to arrange, by friendly negotiation, a common course of action in Eastern and Central Asia that will remove or minimize the chances of future collision. And here the chief point of danger is China, which seems in a state of disintegration, though it is not safe to dogmatize regarding that strange community. But where everything is uncertain there is the better opportunity for Russia and England, the only two Great Powers largely interested, to come to a mutual understanding on a basis of friendly concession and compromise. This basis must be mainly a commercial one, for English interests in the East are commercial, and our only objection to Russia is that she rigidly closes every door to foreign trade by prohibitive tariffs. If Russia and England would only come to an agreement as to Chinese trade and industrial development, England would cease to oppose the desire of Russia for an open and convenient port in the Pacific, and, indeed, assist in every way what is a reasonable and necessary aspiration. Should this be done we should have no further alarms on the North-West Frontier of India, for in the development of Siberia and the disintegration of China a more profitable field for Russian activity will be found than in an insane attempt at suicide by attacking England at the very point where she is least vulnerable. I have no high estimate of Russian diplomacy, the principal successes of which have been due to the fears or jealousies of others; but I do not imagine that it is so foolish as to include an Indian invasion in its programme of the future. The truth is that, although India will always excite the interest and cupidity of the rivals and enemies of England, it is a nut too hard for any European Power to hope to crack. It is recognized that India is an inherent part of the life and greatness of England, and that an attack upon it would be repulsed with the whole force of the Empire. Such a conflict is not regarded by any European Power with enthusiasm; for however much it may suit our rivals to decry our power, they have no desire to test the correctness of their estimate. For English statesmen no more fruitful political field is open than the cultivation of friendly relations with Russia of such a nature that each Power shall be equally benefited. We do not want an alliance on any other than equal and reciprocal terms; and self-respect requires an equivalent for every concession. The English people would never tolerate their leaders placing them in the undignified and subservient position which France occupies with regard to Russia, and which the French are now beginning to realize and resent. But there is no reason why England and Russia should be

other than friends. Their interests in the East, rightly considered, are not opposed, and with timely concession might be made identical, if it be once accepted by both as axiomatic that mutual toleration is necessary, and that it will be for their mutual advantage to exclude other rivals. If this policy is accepted by the English Foreign Office, we may continue the peaceful development of India without interruption. But if, on the other hand, we are to be dragged hither and thither in search of an impossible scientific frontier by military advisers who have not to find the money for their ambitious schemes, we shall only accentuate the poverty of India and create a sullen feeling of discontent that is far more dangerous to our rule than any Russian invasion.

LEPEL GRIFFIN.

THE MAKING OF MEN AT CAMBRIDGE.

"The Babe, B.A." By Edward F. Benson. London and New York: G. P. Putnams. 1897.

ONE must have given a considerable amount of one's time and have lost a considerable amount of patience in studying the educational machinery of this country to appreciate the full irritation of this book. Education, using the word in its modern sense, is the first business of a civilized community; nothing else matters very much if the making of able, intelligent and broad-minded men goes on. And Cambridge is one of the two great establishments where the wealthier classes of England are educated; upon its circle of ideas and suggestions depends very much of the direct legislation and, what is far more important, the informal control of our land and industries in the times of trouble that lie before us. Nothing can alter that; however inefficient Cambridge and Oxford may be in their man-making, nothing can deprive them of their fundamental influence upon the mental development of the powerful classes for many years to come. They control it not only directly but indirectly through the Church and the machinery of Secondary Education. The only possible countervailing force of any importance is literature. And Mr. Benson's book shows us rather vividly how far the University authorities appreciate this unavoidable responsibility.

The book is all the more instructive because it is fairly evident that these wider issues have never entered Mr. Benson's mind. He calls it "superficial," perceiving its irrelevance and not realizing its nature. The only alternatives he thought of were "spiritualities, heroes, century-making captains of elevens, chess Blues and higher aspirations"; the "super-normal plane," "where people like me have no business to intrude." He is in that stage of development when the University is an ultimate fact—a fact one regards without any more analysis than the ordinary man gives to time and space. The University is a thing that comes after the Public School as age comes after one's prime. Mr. Benson declares that Alan St. Aubyn (poor lady!) libels University life, and there was a fine opportunity for a young man who had been there recently to give the irrelevant truth of things. And here it is, written in high spirits, with Murger's ghost in the background—trivial, shallow, adolescent, passably truthful—a real document. And apart from some strained jokes (Chapter X. *e.g.*), a want of characterization, a few jumbled sentences and a persistent use of an offensive word, "onto," it is, saving its total lack of insight and so forth, not at all ill written. But "derelict" is once used as if it meant disabled—which is odd ignorance after a classical education. It professes to be reminiscent—it very probably is; and the foolish nickname of the hero Arbutnot—incredible did one not know the practice of a certain playful type of young men—is the title of the book.

It is curious to observe that the Babe, B.A. and his two intimate friends talk exactly like High School girls. There is the same curious half-hysterical disposition to strongly unsuitable adjectives—"delightful decorous gaiety," for instance, to describe the "Sunday Club"—the same recurrent resort to misquotation from school lessons, the same incessant straining after brilliancy that renders that particular type of young woman in

her youthful phase unfit for human intercourse. This sort of thing:—

"I think we sang hymns afterwards, or else we looked at photographs of cathedrals; I forget which. Hymns and photographs are so much alike."

"O Lord! what do you mean?" said Reggie.

"They are both like Sunday evening, and things which are like the same thing are like one another. At eleven we parted."

"The wicked old Babe doesn't care for simple pleasures," said Ealing. "He knows a thing or two." One must not be a bit surprised if he added "my dear," and patted his hair after that. I must confess I rarely meet any sort of young male who gabbled in this fashion, and when I have I resort promptly to some curtailing expedient and have now forgotten the incident. Yet it is not the sort of thing one readily forgets. And the one thing that the Babe takes seriously in his ridiculous life is a ridiculous piece of dishonesty at cards. But this is wandering from the argument of this review, which concerns itself not so much with the Babe as with his attitude—that is to say, with Mr. Benson's attitude—towards the University authorities.

The remarkable thing is the utter absence of any real grip by these authorities upon the undergraduates. Discipline, apart from the "Proggins" and a shabby system of petty fines, there is none. The Babe's attitude towards his teachers and governors—and he is by no means a very vicious youngster—is simply light-hearted contempt. The strongest influence is Stewart, an undignified person who talks like Mr. Benson trying hard to imitate the "Green Carnation," and makes a boon companion of these youngsters. He is an atrocious tuft-hunter, and talks foully on Saturday nights. Besides him we are introduced to Mr. Langridge, "in body insignificant, in mind incoherent;" to Mr. Jones, of mean appearance and uncertain temper, who is beaten at croquet and mutters "impudent young ass" at the Babe; to Swotchem, the history coach, "the dustiest, fustiest thing" in his "dusty, fusty rooms," with bleary eyes and "a quick, nervous manner," and that crammer who circulated among his pupils a half-sheet of paper not very clearly printed, containing all the procedure of the Athenian law, and which "if learnt by heart quite unintelligently as he recommended would ensure full marks on any question that might be set on the subject." When one of his pupils returned from the examination . . . "he literally danced for joy . . . when he saw that three questions out of nine could be answered from his repulsive little half-sheet." The modern don seems rarely cleanly, and always wanting in self-respect. Swotchem was a member of an occult club called the Apostles, the members of which met in a shamefaced manner. . . . "They were radical Agnostics. They affected red ties to show they disapproved of everything." And, again, the dons "are bounded by narrow horizons, and the only glimpse they catch of the great world is their bed-maker as she carries out their slop pail from their bedrooms." They fumble foolishly with a performance of the "Agamemnon"—Montaigne's pedants returned—and finally pray the Babe to do it for them. They play "whist at threepenny points, which they seem to find strangely exhilarating." They talk seriously of Psychical Research, and read Max Nordau's "Degeneration" with equal seriousness. . . . It is a dismal picture, and, so far as Mr. Benson goes, it is probably a true one. Are there no men there at all, one wonders, but only coarse snobs and shy crammers, afraid of their pupils, physically and socially, for the nearest approach to energy?

Such are the men-makers at Cambridge, as Mr. Benson saw them, and so they make men by an elaborate regimen of snobbery, idleness and timidity; and these youngsters go on—the richer ones—to administer great businesses, wide lands, and to influence, some of them, thousands of lives, while the poorer ones drift into the middle-class schools and the Church, and disseminate the tradition, the student's tradition, chiefly of manners, the point of honour and slang, which seems the only really educational influence at work there.

"The Babe, B.A." is a book naïvely appealing even by its cover decoration and its photographs of Cambridge scenery to the class of people who read Alan St. Aubyn's novels for their University colour. It will entertain and instruct them hugely. They will read, with respectful envy, of the larks, the wit, the fine careless extravagance of these young men. It raises laughs, and the less the reader thinks the heartier his laugh will be. It may be read side by side with "Jude the Obscure." Then no one of more than the meanest intelligence will laugh at all.

H. G. W.

GUNS AND SHOOTING.

"A Bibliography of Guns and Shooting." Compiled and revised to date. By Wirt Gerrare. London: The Roxburghe Press. 1896.

THIS is a guide to the numerous books which have been published from time to time on guns and shooting. To students it will be invaluable because, although it does not contain all that has been written on these subjects, and is indeed purposely incomplete in order to keep it within reasonable proportions, it contains all that the English student, as distinguished from the book-collector, is likely to need. His brain will indeed be full if he masters even a tenth part of the works quoted. Modern military treatises on ordnance are completely excluded because they can be found in military bibliographies, and Russian books are just as drastically dealt with because of typographical difficulties, and because, in the view of Mr. Wirt Gerrare, the interest taken in them by our countrymen is as yet infinitesimal. No doubt he is right, and no doubt he is equally correct, when he eliminates certain books whose only claim to consideration is the title on their covers. It strikes us, indeed, that Mr. Wirt Gerrare has done his work with much judgment and ability, and he has conferred an immense boon on the particular class of readers whose interests he has taken up. We also commend the system of classification which he has adopted. The usual custom of arrangement according to an initial letter of the name of the person writing the book is not a convenient one. It is, in fact, only a survival of times when there were so few authors, that men of erudition could remember all of them, and possessed at any rate a general idea as to the dates at which they wrote. Manifestly the conditions of to-day are widely different, and no man can be expected to be familiar with the names of all those who have taken pen in hand. Moreover, progress in firearms went on steadily, if slowly, for centuries, and in the case of works written before 1850 the date at which any one of them was published is often not by any means a bad index of its contents. It is for this reason that our author has adopted a chronological arrangement for the first part of his book. He calls this the "ancient" portion. Considering that it deals with works which appeared between 1450 and 1850, this sounds a little startling to our ears. It is, however, the fact that a gunner of Henry VIII.'s time need not have been greatly staggered if he had been suddenly called upon to work one of our field pieces which helped to win Gujerat or even Inkerman, as may be demonstrated any day in our museum at Woolwich; while there is more than a chasm of four hundred years between the guns that bombarded Sebastopol and those which are on board our battleships now. In the modern section a different system has been found desirable. Here the subdivisions are governed by the language in which the work is written, and the English section is again subdivided so as to comprise under their various headings works which deal with technical questions, shooting with gun or rifle, and finally with sport. Then we have the different hunting grounds forming each a subdivision in which may be found all the sources of information for that particular part of the world. As an appendix we are given a list of works on explosives and an invaluable catalogue of magazine articles and technical papers. The literature of firearms covers an enormous field, and it is impossible to praise too highly the industry and patience which have explored this vast region for the benefit of those who wish to visit it. Mr. Gerrare has evidently wandered in it for years,

and is an accomplished guide for all that it contains. Before leaving him we would notice the excellent Introduction to the volume. It is written with a scholarly ease and with a breadth of vision which are most fascinating, and the matter is as well worthy of attention as the style. Mr. Gerrare has tears in his voice when he tells us that there are signs not to be mistaken that the days of the hand firearm are numbered. The romance of sport has to a great extent lost ground owing to its having become too fashionable; a grouse drive has grown into a function; and a battue, owing to the presence of both sexes, is becoming like a garden party. In war the decline is even more apparent. The rifleman is daily becoming a person of less importance. "The contention deduced from contemporary literature, and not advanced for the first time, is that the hand firearm, both for purposes of sport and as a military weapon, will not in the early future be regarded as possessing the importance attributed to it in the recent past." These words are startling as regards sporting weapons, but are undoubtedly true so far as those of warfare are concerned. On the battlefield of the future, machine and quick-firing guns will do most of the destruction, and men will be murdered by artillery with a rapidity and an economy of ammunition which will surely decrease the importance of the infantry soldier. Cavalry have been superseded by foot soldiers: in due time the gunner will in turn step into the most important position. The best intellects of the world of science are busy in devising and perfecting shooting machines, and every year their labours show greater fruit. We may regret, but we cannot check, the onward movement. Those who would direct or modify it, or who desire to understand its full force and importance, will do well to consult the pages before us, and will certainly find in Mr. Wirt Gerrare a trustworthy and learned guide.

GIBBON AND HIS FRIENDS.

"The Girlhood of Maria Josepha Holroyd, Lady Stanley of Alderley." Edited by J. H. Adeane. Longmans, Green & Co. 1897.

AUTHORS have their fates, whether books have them or no, and nothing is more curious than the obstinate revivals, so to say, of certain individuals after periods of comparative obscurity. What brings them forward? It is impossible to say, and it seems to be equally impossible to plan a revival of this kind beforehand. It is not Byron, but Gibbon, in whom everybody takes an interest just now, and we are confronted with the remarkable phenomenon of the outburst of a whole Gibbon literature more than one hundred and three years after the death of the historian. The book before us is a charming one, but its materials have long been gathering dust in family archives, and it is highly probable that they might have languished there for half a century more if the mighty name of Gibbon had not, like a trumpet, summoned these elegant ghosts out of their tomb of pot-pourri. Maria Josepha Holroyd comes to life again because she had the happiness of being the friend of him whose mouth, "mellifluous as Plato's," was a round hole nearly in the centre of his visage.

The most intimate of the friends of Gibbon was John Baker Holroyd, who in 1781 was created Lord Sheffield. It is to his piety and care that we owe our possession of the posthumous works of the historian in their present form, and it was he who preserved with so much care the six autobiographies. It is not necessary here to remind our readers how and in what degree that embargo has been removed which was laid on the more private papers of Gibbon by a clause in Lord Sheffield's will. Enough has been said to recall the intimacy existing between the great writer and this intelligent, estimable man. Gibbon, writing to his stepmother in 1791, remarks: "Lord Sheffield's eldest daughter is indeed a most extraordinary young woman." This was Maria Josepha Holroyd, then just twenty years of age, the heroine of the present volume. The early death of their mother, Abigail, Lady Sheffield, forced Maria Josepha and her sister Louisa into a more responsible social prominence. The one became Lady

Stanley of Alderley, the other Lady Louisa Clinton. The book before us is composed of the letters written to one another by these ladies, by their aunt "Serena" Holroyd, and by various members of the family, among whom Gibbon may be included.

There can be no question that Maria Josepha was an excellent correspondent. She will not rank among the great female letter-writers of the eighteenth century, but she had unusual opportunities of seeing remarkable events at home and abroad, she was acquainted with many eminent persons, and she observed and recorded what she saw with picturesqueness and vivacity. We miss, perhaps, the evidence in her letters of strength of personal character; she seems very lively, very appreciative, very full of a quick and tender womanly sweetness; but there is no evidence of exceptional intellectual power. It would be easy, however, to cull from her pages a perfect posy of bright, audacious remarks and piquant descriptions. We propose not to do this, but to follow through her letters those glimpses of her father's friend which we catch ever and anon. We appear to ourselves to be walking with a bevy of fair dames in the avenues of Sheffield Place, and to pass occasionally within sight of a short fat gentleman walking heavily at the side of a sturdy tall personage who is dressed like a farmer: the former is Mr. Edward Gibbon and the latter is Lord Sheffield. The chatter and gossip of the ladies is delicious, yet we stretch our ear to hear what these men are saying.

When Maria Josepha wrote the earliest letter of hers which has been preserved, in July 1782, three volumes of the "Decline and Fall" had been published. Gibbon was forty-five years of age, a literary celebrity, a wearied and incompetent member of Parliament. When he is mentioned a second time in the correspondence he has told the young ladies a diverting anecdote, but is laid up at Bath with the gout. With the customary whimsicality of correspondence, which has the habit of mentioning to us what Tuft, the lapdog, and Molly, the goose, have done, but not really important matters, none of these ladies' effusions mention the great event, Gibbon's daring and obstinate determination to exile himself to Lausanne in 1783. We know that it created positive dismay in Lord Sheffield's household, but Maria Josepha does not happen to speak of it. Gibbon's name recurs in August 1787, when we find Lord Sheffield hastening to town to welcome him on his arrival in England with the completed MS. of the "Decline and Fall." He is brought in triumph to Sheffield Place, and from this point he becomes for the remainder of his life almost a member of the Holroyd family, and certainly its closest friend.

Serena, at Bath, in January 1788, asks Maria Josepha if it would not "be civil and kind and decorous" of her to go and "drink tea this evening with the gouty historian." He now begins to appear under the familiar appellation of "Mr. Gib" and "Gib." Did the young ladies remember that "gib" is the old country word for a lazy tom-cat toasting himself before the fire? Gradually the figure of the historian becomes less shadowy. We gain the impression that, as is so often the case in similar instances, the young people were inclined slightly to resent the incense poured out on the family favourite by their parents. In July 1788 Gibbon returns to Lausanne and to his now dying companion Deyverdun. Miss Maria Josepha somewhat pertly comments on 24 August:—

"We have not had a single creature here [at Sheffield Place] to stay since we lost Mr. Gibbon. Mamma would say, with Mark Anthony, 'Oh, what a loss was there, my country-men.' I am reconciled to my fate." They all met next at Lausanne, where the Holroyds, after passing through a very excited France, found themselves on a morning of July 1791 welcomed by Gibbon to the beautiful house, "commanding a delightful view of the Lake and Mountains," which he had lately enlarged for the reception of guests. This was the beginning of a visit which lasted nearly four months, and of which a very luminous impression may be gleaned from Maria Josepha's letters. Gibbon was now at length severely shaken in that even philosophy which had so long supported him. His health was undermined, and he had lost the companionship of two of the persons whom he had loved the best, Mrs.

Porten in 1786, Deyverdun in 1789. Sunken in spirits, and vaguely apprehensive for the future, the visit of Lord and Lady Sheffield, with their amiable and lively daughters, came exactly at the moment to supply him with an extraordinary revival of happiness. Maria Josepha's letters are full of little amusing details of his everyday life, his infatuation for the Swiss, his hatred of the French, his solemn flirtations, his slow and laborious movements. Of course, in the very first letter from Lausanne, La Belle Curchod of the old romance is sure to be mentioned:—

"We went to Coppet on Thursday to see M. Necker, and slept there. I never saw anything so broken-hearted as he appears to be. He speaks very little. Papa got a little conversation upon Politicks with him, while we were walking; but he does not join at all in general conversation. Madame Necker is very learned, as you know, and talked a great deal with Mr. Gibbon upon subjects of literature. She is rather a fine woman: much painted, and, when she is not painted, very yellow, but, upon the whole, better looking than I expected. Necker is a very vulgar-looking man, very like the Print of him in 'The Importance of Religious Opinions.' Madame de Staël was there; she is uglier than Lady K. Douglas; but so lively and entertaining that you would totally forget in five minutes whether she was handsome or ugly. They seem to be very fond of one another. Madame de Staël is perfectly wild, and must keep up her Papa and Mama's spirits very much."

One wonders whether Maria Josepha ever heard that Madame de Staël's design, when she was a little girl, was to marry Gibbon in order to secure the unbroken enjoyment of his conversation for her Papa and Mama.

That Gibbon was afraid of going on the Lake, that he was called at Lausanne "King of the Place," that he could not bear playing second fiddle, that he was in the habit of opening his round mouth some time before he had arranged his sentence, that he was very much in love with a pretty Portuguese (Madame de Silva)—all these and many other gentle impertinences enliven the letters from Maria Josepha to Serena in the course of these gay months at Lausanne; but the very cordial and graceful letters which the historian begins to write to her after her departure show that the impression she made upon him was deeper than her giddy notes suggest. She did not like the town of his exile at first, and Gibbon "could never understand how two persons of such superior merit as Miss Holroyd and Miss Lausanne could have so little relish for one another." He speaks of their long stay at his house with emotion and regret, and says of the apartment they occupied "it is shut up, and I know not when I shall again visit it with pleasure." It is a melancholy fact that this historic house of Gibbon's was destroyed less than a year ago to make room for an enlargement of the Lausanne post-office.

In October 1792 Serena expresses the hope that "those French Demons" may drive the historian to England, but he loiters on, indolent, irresolute, although Lausanne had long ceased to be a safe or comfortable residence. In April 1793 Lady Sheffield suddenly died, alone, on a visit to her London house, and the shock of the news broke through the cobwebs of Gibbon's laziness. He set forth immediately for England and his beloved Sheffield, to whose consolation he wholly devoted himself. Nothing is more ridiculous than the old legend that Gibbon had no heart; he was not a man of passion indeed, but of the most loyal and durable affection. The remainder of his life, to be so startlingly curtailed, was mainly spent with Lord Sheffield, and at Sheffield Place. Maria Josepha's letters are full of pert, affectionate allusions to the whims and habits of "the Great Gib," who is even on one occasion described as a "Beau." He has been "raving about Turtle" all the summer, and, poor man, when one comes at last, he is away on a visit. If Gibbon had eaten less turtle and drunk less madeira, the history of eighteenth-century literature might have been different. Not until 13 November, 1793, does Maria Josepha express any solicitude about the historian's health; but on that date "poor Mr. Gibbon" is obliged to go to town immediately to consult physicians. Four days later there is an operation, and "he is much relieved," and soon is playing cribbage

again with Papa. On 1 January the earliest note of real alarm is sounded, and the letters are thenceforward full of his fluctuations and symptoms, until on the 17th the whole family bursts forth in lamentations at the death of their illustrious friend and guest. It is a very interesting record, and one which throws a charming new light on the domestic habits and intimate associations of the greatest of English historians. To the remainder of the volume we have not found it possible to do justice here; but we warmly recommend it.

MONASTICISM AND MODERNITY.

"Monasticism: Ancient and Modern." By the Rev. F. C. Woodhouse, M.A. London: Gardner & Co.

ON the subject of monasticism Mr. F. C. Woodhouse appears to entertain complacently confused ideas. To him the ancient notion which Basil in the East and Benedict in the West crystallized into practice means no more than a vague and loose philanthropy based upon a general love of the Creator. Now the whole point of that movement of isolation among the early Christian Churches was the personal salvation of the soul. If a man left the city and retired to the desert, if he left his home and took himself and his future to the hillside monasteries of Italy, the motive was, in every instance without exception, purely personal and selfish. He gave up this world in exchange for another, and the more thoroughly he gave up this world, the more necessary it became that there should be some fixed and unalterable law set down whereby the surrender might be accomplished without friction, without anxiety, and without the individual trouble of consideration. From this sprang the "Rule" of St. Benedict which in time superseded every other monastic regimen in Europe. The personal and selfish ambition for final felicity was by this rule realized in comparatively straightforward practice; the only difficulty was to live up to the regulations, which themselves guarded the disciple from thought, scruple or hesitation. Here, then, is the perfectly plain basis of monasticism, the final principles of which included such necessary abnegations as the submission of will, the community of property and a general continence of life and manners. It cannot be too certainly asserted that there was in the downright essence of monastic life no sentiment of altruism at all; charity and community were merely aids to ulterior individual happiness.

Mr. Woodhouse, however, not only follows Archbishop Trench in theory, but bases the whole purpose of his book upon the notion that monasticism is merely an active expression of religious benevolence. "The Mendicant Orders," says Trench, for example, "introduced a new idea into Monasticism." The mendicant orders, of course, did nothing of the kind. Dominic and Francis, contemporary founders of the mendicant orders, deliberately discarded monasticism from the scheme of their designing; they denied even the name of monk to their subjects, who to this day glory in the title of friar; and from the beginning the monastic orders, regarding themselves with an aristocratic self-complacency, had but the smallest sympathy with the preaching orders. But Mr. Woodhouse, having indulged himself in a preliminary confusion of ideas upon this subject, pursues his vain questionings with magnificent indifference to fact. Is there a hope, he asks, of a "monastic" revival in the Established Church? With daring originality he notes "corruptio optimi pessima." It is the way of the world, he declares, that even the noblest institutions will slowly admit the disintegration of declining humanity; but Mr. Woodhouse looks around him upon the Church Army, the Missionary Brotherhoods, the Societies of Missions, the Grey Ladies—who pay a guinea a week for board and lodging—and he is enlivened by the prospect, which appears to him filled with monastic promise. To him, indeed, one would think that the whole religious world shines as a palace of monks: the Jesuits, the Carmelites, and the Christian Brothers, no less than the Grey Ladies, are so many monkish apparitions. For, in truth, if once you accept so wide a definition of the term as this of Mr. Woodhouse, there is no reason why you should

not contemplate Mr. Frederic Harrison as a modern monk at once, seeing that Christianity is really no longer an essential element of monasticism.

Mr. Woodhouse's historic survey of monastic institutions, where it is not involved in his absurd theories, is scrappily interesting, though he should know that Trappists and not Franciscans occupy the monastery of Tre Fontane, *fuori le mura*; apart from this excellence, such as it is, his book has no earthly relation to fact and life. Modern Monasticism, in a word, though not perhaps quite an impossible phrase, is, as nearly as may be, a contradiction in terms.

RECENT VERSE.

"Poems and Ballads." By "Q." London: Methuen & Co. 1896.

"The Praise of Life." By Laurence Binyon. London: Elkin Mathews. 1896.

IN criticizing accomplished verse which is not of the very first order of originality, reviewers are very apt to neglect the consideration, Is this, or is it not, interesting and able literature? Judged by the higher test, it must be acknowledged that "Q." does not rank, at present, among the poets; he is not sufficiently the master of a charm exclusively his own. But it would be a narrow spirit, indeed, which should deny the excellence of what he writes in verse. It may be secondary, but it is of real literary value; we would utter not a word which might discourage the author from continuing to produce it. When we say that it is secondary, we mean that, without imitation, it continues to recall to us earlier styles which have and must have the credit of precedence. When we read "The Masques in the Street" we are pleasantly reminded of "The Vision of Sin." "Dolor Oogo" would not be quite what it is if Rossetti had never written "Love's Nocturn." The "Ode upon Elington Bridge" has a very agreeable flavour of "The Scholar Gypsy." Still more closely has "Q." studied the lilt and the diction of the seventeenth-century Royalist lyric, and "The Splendid Spur" is composed in deliberate and successful emulation of Shirley. Christina Rossetti, Wordsworth, even Mr. Rudyard Kipling, have passed into the crucible, and we are faintly conscious of their presence.

We are not to be understood to bring this forward as a fault in "Q.'s" verses. It is a characteristic which forbids us to count him among the Makers, among those who penetrate the world with a new music; but it does not modify our impression of him as an excessively clever and interesting writer who is more than justified in employing the medium of verse. Perhaps he is just a little too "clever" to be a poet. The inspired lyrist is often limited in sympathy and monotonous in interest; he is thinking too entirely of the things of the spirit to indulge the casual reader. But "Q." does not forget that the large public likes variety, incident, sensation; he is not an exceedingly popular essayist and novelist for nothing. There is tact in his table of contents; the knack of adroitly catering to the public appears in the arrangement of his pieces. This is as it should be. If we do not get the quintessential rapture, by all means let us have pleasing and various literature in metre.

Excellent and solid workmanship is characteristic of this volume, and perhaps the finest example of it is found where we might least expect to find it, in the blank-verse narrative called "Columbus at Seville." This begins a little tamely, but soon rises to a genuine and sustained eloquence such as few living poets, of whatever rank, could attain to. When we reach the passage beginning "But my reward, how came it?" the verse is found to have reached a dignity and melody so remarkable that we are tempted to think the next page the most convincing which "Q." has hitherto published in verse. Further on, how admirable is the description of how Isabella greeted Columbus!

"Ah, blessed hands! Ah, blessed woman's hands—
Stretched to undo irreparable wrong!
Yea, the more blest being all impotent!
A queen's I had not touched: but hers met mine
In humbleness across man's common doom,
In sadness and in wisdom beyond pride.

They are cold beside her now, and cannot stir.
Further than I have travelled she hath fared:
But I shall follow. Soon will come the call:
And I shall grip the tiller once again;
The purple night shall heave upon the floor
Mile after mile; the dawn invade the stars;
The stars, the dawn—how long? And following
down

The moon's long ripple, I shall hear again
The frigate-bird go whistling—see the flash—
The light on Guanahani! Salvador!
Let thy Cross flame upon me in that star,
And from that Cross outstretch her sainted
hands."

Mr. Laurence Binyon, too, has an elegant sobriety and a touch of intellectual pathos which qualify him to take his place among those who supply good literature in metre. He is not so lively nor so varied as "Q.," but he sees clearly and describes delicately. He gives us the impression of having been much under the influence of Mr. Robert Bridges and a little under that of Patmore. It would be hasty to base a final opinion of his style from the twelve poems which he publishes in "The Praise of Life." That one of those which has most of a subject is "Montenegro," a piece which describes the ascent from Cattaro to the tableland which has charmed so many travellers. If we prefer the prose of M. Pierre Loti, we measure Mr. Binyon's verse by a severe standard. He is happier in writing of reveries in the woodland or by the sea-shore, or in noting tender impressions of natural emotion. He seems to write best of

"Straight-stemmed woods that darkly still
Stand upon the rounded hill,
Where the silver saplings gleam
On the fringes of a dream;
Mists that in faint fleeces blur
All the frayed plumes of the fir,
And that whiten the fresh green
Of the bosomed field between,"

and such pleasant country sights as these. We deplore Mr. Binyon's tendency to play tricks with the recognized laws of English prosody, and here we suspect that Mr. Bridges, that learned heretic, has seduced his taste.

MODERN OPERA HOUSES AND THEATRES.

"Modern Opera Houses and Theatres." By Edwin O. Sachs and Ernest A. E. Woodrow, A.R.I.B.A. 3 vols. folio. London: Batsford. 1896-97.

THIS work, the joint production of Messrs. Edwin O. Sachs and Ernest A. E. Woodrow, is intended to continue the description of the most important theatres erected, published originally in 1842 by M. Clément Contant, a second edition of the same work being brought out in 1860. It is a collection of drawings with descriptive letterpress, both being so full of detail and particulars that the theatrical architect need not go outside it for information, whether he has on hand a palatial structure similar to Semper's building at Vienna, or the more homely venture which provides a home for the drama in our provincial towns. At the same time, the value of the work as a collection of architectural designs, quite independent of the fact that the buildings illustrated are playhouses, gives general interest to the layman as well as the architect.

The first volume is devoted exclusively to buildings of modern type, exemplified by drawings of twenty-four theatres, three from Austria and Hungary, six German, eight English, one each from Holland, Belgium, Norway and Sweden, and two from Russia, in addition to the proposed Opera House at St. Petersburg. Even when we bear in mind that the Court theatre abroad is as important an adjunct to the State as a palace, it is surprising to learn what splendid buildings are provided for what may be called the amusement of the classes and the education of the masses. Foreign States look upon the Royal, Imperial, or Municipal Theatre as a large factor in the art education of the population, and hence neither time nor money is spared to make it a palace of the combined arts and a worthy example of the mother art of architecture. The most important example is the Court Theatre, Vienna, of which a series

of adequate drawings is given. The Viennese are to be congratulated on the result of their nine years' labour; for their "Hofburg" Theatre is one of the finest buildings of modern times.

Turning from this creation of Semper and Hasenauer to theatres of less ambitious character, we find many buildings worthy of the study of the architect and the actor-manager or owner, as the case may be. Amongst the Continental theatres, the Court Opera House, Dresden, is one of the best from an architectural point of view, the auditorium being clearly emphasized as distinct from the stage block. Whether the latter would not have been better treated as a square block without pediments seems to us a question worthy of consideration. The Wagner Opera House, Bayreuth, is a strikingly original design, carrying out a type of theatre in which the main and only object is to provide a large floor area, unobstructed in any way whatever; for although provided with small galleries, they are at the very back of the auditorium. A great objection to this type is the effect which a small audience has upon the actors, since a large floor space is then quite unoccupied, and the theatre appears very empty indeed. Other theatres illustrated worthy of attention are the Municipal Theatre at Amsterdam and the Flemish Theatre at Brussels, the latter having for its chief architectural adornment large galleries running along the sides, each projecting beyond the one above, forming, according to the views of the designer (M. J. Baes), a perfect means of escape in case of panic from fire or other causes, as persons can easily drop from one gallery to the one below, and so to the street, if only they can retain sufficient presence of mind to do so. The architectural effect is not happy, and we hope architects have enough invention left to carry out adequate means of escape in some other manner. The proposed Court Opera House at St. Petersburg is a pretentious design, surpassing in size and in the display of ornament any of the Continental theatres, even the Paris Opera House or the theatres at Vienna or Dresden; and it is worthy of the city where palaces abound and Imperial magnificence is a most important factor in State government.

Coming down from this stately structure—a very long drop—we turn to the theatres illustrating the best work of the English theatrical architect, as exemplified by drawings of the Palace Theatre, Daly's, Trafalgar, Grand, and Alhambra—all in London; the Grand Theatre, Wolverhampton; the Palace Variety Theatre, Manchester; and the Empire Variety Theatre, Bristol. It is absolutely impossible, as Mr. Sachs points out in his introductory remarks, to compare any of these theatres with those of the Continental cities, for the simple reason that, on the whole, very little "architecture" is to be seen. They are buildings in which the most careful planning is devoted to obtaining the greatest number of seats in a given space; but they are nothing beyond that. Mass, breadth, grouping and architectural effect all give way to the instructions "It must be a commercial success." Even "Old Drury" is better, in a way, than some of the modern productions; its object is unmistakable, though carried out in the very plainest manner; and internally its rotundo and grand staircase stand alone and unequalled amongst the theatrical work of this country. We have noticed the leading features in the first volume of "Modern Opera Houses and Theatres," and we think enough has been said to commend it to the attention of our readers who may be interested in such matters. We should, perhaps, specially point out that the description of the actual working of theatres explains much as to which misconception has hitherto been too frequent, and that the text is as readable and entertaining to the layman as the illustrations are pleasing.

NIMROD AS AUTHOR.

"A Sporting Tour." By Colonel T. Thornton. New Edition, with Introduction and Notes by Sir Herbert Maxwell, Bart. Illustrated by G. Garrard and G. E. Lodge. London: Arnold. 1897.

"WHEN a new book comes out, read an old one," is the spirit, if not the form, of an excellent maxim of no great antiquity; and few who know the

merits of some of the older sporting works long out of print will deny both editor and publisher of the "Sportsman's Library" the praise due to them for rescuing from oblivion the best of these records, were it only for the instructive comparisons they suggest with later works on game countries under the altered conditions of latter-day civilization. A sporting holiday in the Highlands cannot, even in these days of cheap travel, be undertaken with a light purse; and a century ago it was a formidable venture indeed. The "first of sportsmen in all its branches," to quote Colonel Thornton's quaint phrase, had to invade the land of the Picts with three boats and a vast number of horses, not to mention an imposing retinue of followers that included among their number a special artist and several falconers. A book of this kind has two recommendations: there is the aforementioned pleasure of comparing it with more recent impressions of the natural history of the country written about, and there are the many delightful passages in which the author, a man of undoubted powers of observation, records his opinions on sport in general and the methods in vogue among the Northerners of his day. When read, for example, side by side with the more recent accounts by St. John, or with the still more modern "Wild Life of Scotland," the pages before us suggest melancholy reflections anent the dwindling of our island fauna. We compare, with silent protest against those "naturalists" (collectors), the curse of the countryside, Colonel Thornton's experiences beside Loch Lomond with the impressions we received on the same spot a year ago. A century ago the waters yielded perch of over seven pounds in weight, and the hillside was still darkened by the shadow of the hovering osprey. That the author occasionally waxes pompous cannot be denied, nor can his oft-repeated appreciation of his own skill with gun and rod, or his fine contempt for less favoured friends who swam the fly as if it were a worm, or trained their dogs only to kill for the pot, be considered in the best of taste. He will readily be forgiven, however, for the quaintness of his observations, for his strictures on the little familiarities permitted to ghillies, his estimate of golf—"a wholesome exercise for those who do not think such gentle sports too trivial for men"—his criticisms of deer-stalking and whisky, "the darling liquor of the country," all of which form most diverting reading. It must be admitted that some of his methods of fishing and shooting are open to criticism. Thus, his "fox-hounds" cannot be considered a very sportsman-like method of pike-fishing, nor can we commend his shooting ground birds cowering under tame hawks.

Sir Herbert Maxwell has performed his editorial duties in a praiseworthy fashion. It is to be hoped that the library which he has in progress will include Thornton's records of an interesting sporting tour in France, which took the form of letters to Lord Darlington. The present addition to Mr. Arnold's library is worthy of the volumes that have gone before, though its illustrations, more especially those in colour, are not wholly satisfactory. It is also to be regretted that the descriptive headings in the original were omitted, and that some kind of index could not have been given.

NEW BOOKS AND REPRINTS.

"Daphnis and Chloë." From the French translation of Longus by J. Amyot. Revised, edited and completed by Paul Louis Courier. Illustrated by Raphael Collin. London: H. S. Nichols. 1896.

IN his preface to this very elegant edition of a famous and charming romance M. Jules Claretie styles the work of Longus "a poem of puberty." The description is sound enough, and is perhaps peculiarly appropriate to more than one French edition of this inspiring romance. But the "Daphnis and Chloë" is much more than a poem of puberty. Probably the original and entirely lost form of the romantic idea it embodies was in no sense a poem of puberty. For it cannot be doubted that just as Longus has inspired a host of fine imitators, more or less endowed with "sensibility" and elegance, his own work is descended from an antique model of which it is a decadent example. The idea it embodies—the dream of awakening love in innocence—was not new-born in his age. It must be referred back to a mild Saturnian reign and to the Golden Age when gold was not. The treatment of the theme by Longus is such as is proper to a civilized, luxurious and sophisti-

cated people. The treatment is, in fact, modern—as modern as "Paul and Virginia." The shepherds are as unconvincing as their innocence. There is too much gold in the romance. The gold and the pirates are grave defects in the picture, as the gold buckles are in Marlowe's beautiful pastoral song. Worse still is the incident of the finding of the purse of gold and the vulgar device of inventing rich parents for Daphnis and Chloë, and a marriage, and a "happy ending." These concessions to respectable commonplace views are such as must needs sicken a poet's soul, and would be impossible to any kind of poet save the author of "a poem of puberty." Yet when all has been urged that may justly be urged against the author's treatment of one of the most enduring and most ancient of humanity's dreams, the early portion, or about three-fourths, of the work of Longus possesses a very real, individual and penetrative charm. Messrs. Nichols have produced this English edition in a most attractive style. The type and paper are excellent. The illustrations of M. Collin are in accord, for the most part, with the subject, and if not what Ingres would have called "Greek" are decidedly "natural."

"The Century of Louis XIV.: its Arts—its Ideas." From the French of Emile Bourgeois, by Mrs. Cashel Hoey. London: Sampson Low & Co.

This noble and finely illustrated volume holds a position entirely companionless among the gift-books and *éditions de luxe* of the season. The Genius of the Age of Louis Quatorze has presided over its production. The scheme of illustration is of the most comprehensive kind. It includes every description of illustration that is elucidative of the age of Louis XIV. It is at once a portrait gallery and a museum of arts and industries. It depicts from various aspects the Court, the Church, the salons and hôtels of the noblesse, from the dining-room and *salon* to the bedchamber and boudoir, the theatre, arts, letters and science of the time. From public and private collections many rare and interesting examples of the work of the master-artists and craftsmen of the century have been selected for illustration. Sculpture, architecture, dress, metal-work, furniture, tapestry, and other fields of design and handicraft, are fully represented. There is no need here to name the artists. The century of Louis XIV. was a great period in the history of Art. It was also a great age of collectors, of whom the Minister Colbert, who formed the nucleus of the splendid Louvre collection of sketches by the Italian and Flemish masters, was the most sagacious and the most princely. So much for the illustration of this attractive book. The work of M. Emile Bourgeois is inspired by the famous essay of Voltaire on the century of Louis XIV. M. Bourgeois evidently shares Voltaire's extreme, perhaps infatuated, admiration of the character and achievements of the *grand monarque*. It is certain that he holds the brilliant sketch of Voltaire in great reverence. He is almost too humble in the attitude he assumes towards it. What he has done is to embroider upon the edges of that imperfect yet dazzling piece of work by the master, rather than to make good the deficiencies in its representation of the age. He has drawn upon the most varied testimony of contemporaries, such as the vivacious annalist Spanheim, the Brandenburger, the most inquisitive and observant of envoys; and La Porte, the King's valet; Mme. de Sévigné, Saint-Simon, La Bruyère, Dangeau, Mme. de Motteville, and many other writers. All this supplementary matter has been woven into the Voltairean document as in some rich needlework where silver and gold may be found intermixed with humbler material. The effect of the texture is pleasing, though the fashion of the mingling may puzzle some English readers to decide which is pure unmingled Voltairean, which Saint-Simonian, and so on. But we need not say that the work of M. Bourgeois, unlike some gift-books, is very far from being *feuilleterage*, or a mere picture-book for the languid leaf-turning of an idler.

"Criticism and the Criticism of Music." By "Roentgen Ray." London: Sanders, Phillips & Co. 1896.

"Wagner's Heroines." By Constance Maud. London: Arnold. 1896.

"The Literature of Music." By James E. Matthew. London: Elliot Stock. 1896.

"The Opera." By R. A. Streatfeild. London: Nimmo. 1897.

This anonymous person Mr. "Roentgen Ray" evidently intends to set us all right. According to him musicians are a pack of envious fools, critics a miserable gang of helpless penny-a-liners, editors the merest money-grabbers who insist upon their critics writing only what will fetch money. Thus "Roentgen Ray" can scarcely be called an optimist; and he indirectly confesses to the hugeness of the task he has undertaken. Unfortunately most of the evils which he sees do not exist outside his imagination; and if they did we fancy his confession that he is able to read "Musical News" would satisfy every reasonable person that he is not the man to cure them—for who that has the smallest feeling for, or knowledge of, music can read "Musical News"? The truth is that musical criticism was never in a better way than it is at present. A few years ago there were only one or two readable critics, like Dr. Ebenezer Prout; but when we look round to-day we may note that the "World," "Academy," "Star," "Pall Mall

Gazette" and other papers have men competent to form an opinion and the literary gift to help them in expressing it. The critics of the older school are gradually subsiding; and we doubt whether one can do to-day what so many could do yesterday—"slate" a composer or concert-giver until the victim consents to pay up, either directly in the form of ten-pound notes, or indirectly in the form of a commission to write a libretto or to make an analytical programme. Librettos are still written and analytical programmes made by critics; but that we believe is only because critics are the only people who can handle the pen passably known to entrepreneurs and musicians; and the fact that commissions are often given to men who have no power whatever on the Press shows that the old order has come to an end. At least we hope and believe it has. Mr. "Roentgen Ray's" silly pamphlet is three or four years late, and anyhow, what he calls criticism does not seem to us to be criticism at all, and the means by which he proposes to alter the existing state of things are ludicrously inept.

Miss Maud's second book of Wagner's stories is fully equal to her first. It is a pity it was not issued a month or so earlier, for a more delightful Christmas present it would be impossible to find. With admirable simplicity, vividness and sometimes beauty Miss Maud tells the stories of Senta, Brunhilda, and Isolde. We have nothing to offer in the way of criticism, and must confine ourselves to recommending every one who likes moving and lovely stories to read these.

Mr. Matthew's book is simply a bibliography, and as such it will be found useful; though we cannot pretend to endorse Mr. Matthew's views on the value of Hawkins and Burney's histories and on many other points.

If Mr. Streatfeild were a little less glib, and would take a few minutes to consider his judgments before delivering them, he would be capable of doing valuable work. Those who read his study of modern Italian composers will remember how his feather-brained enthusiasm and his copiousness of irrelevant notions went far to make that book utterly worthless, considered as serious criticism. He is the victim of the old disease in the book now before us; though the form of his task has prevented it attacking him quite as acutely. The idea was certainly a good one. Owing to the opera being so frequently sung in a foreign tongue most people have only the vaguest ideas of the plots even of the masterpieces; while probably not one in a thousand could tell what "Il Trovatore" or "Martha" is all about. Mr. Streatfeild instructs them. He takes nearly all the operas which have been, are, or ever will be in the everyday repertoire, and summarizes the stories; and so far so good. Unfortunately he has chosen to discuss the music with his customary light-hearted dogmatism; and his pen has run away with him so very fast so very many times that he comes one cropper after another, where a moment's hesitation would have enabled him to keep on his feet. Still, when all is said, his book may be recommended as one of the most useful published of recent years; and its publication is in itself a healthy sign of the times. A few years ago nobody knew or wanted to know the story of "Il Trovatore"; now very few know, it is true, but only opera-singers do not want to know. And we suppose that when once the public knows the story—save the mark!—of "Il Trovatore" and nearly the whole Italian repertoire these operas will be laughed off the stage, in spite of all the silly prima donnas and stupid tenors that Italy has produced. We must add that Mr. J. A. F. Maitland contributes a most interesting little introduction.

One gets some idea of America from Mr. F. Dale Pawle's "A Flying Visit to the American Continent" (Horace Cox). America is a big place, and the scenery must, therefore, be widely diversified. According to Mr. Pawle's vividly contrasted descriptions, we should divide American scenery into three sections. First, there is the scenery which has been described before, and need not, therefore, Mr. Pawle tells us, be described again. Secondly, there is the scenery which, like the piano-playing in the "Times," is fine, very fine, or may be fairly designated as remarkably fine. And, thirdly, there is the scenery which Mr. Pawle relinquishes to that "far abler pen than mine" with which the reader of travels is at once so familiar and so pathetically unacquainted. Next in importance to the description of scenery comes the relation of experiences, and this largely consists of wittily veiled allusions to the bad language which naturally accompanies the extreme discomfort of even the most luxurious travelling. People often say that the man who stays at home cannot see things as they really are, it is only when he is far away that he beholds the familiar circumstances of his life ranged in proper perspective according to their relative importance. There is much truth in the statement. Until you have said "damn" on the slopes of Popocatepetl you can have no idea how funny it is.

The dangers of travelling are well illustrated in the Rev. Alexander A. Boddy's "By Ocean, Prairie, and Peak" (S.P.C.K.). The author is plainly an energetic, clear-headed clergyman, engrossed in his calling, and when he speaks of emigrants in Canada, their needs and their chances, he reveals how interesting he could have been if he had treated fully and separately the facts which he was particularly qualified to observe. But he has elected to sink his individuality in the genus traveller;

hence an unsatisfactory scrappiness, much triviality and some chestnuts. Such an event, for instance, as the photographing of an iceberg is a great excitement on board ship, and down it goes in the diary, to appear some day in print. Again, nothing but the hasty search for material to fill up the traveller's account could have persuaded the Rev. A. Boddy to devote three pages to the tale of Montcalm, Wolfe and Gray's "Elegy."

But we would rather listen to any traveller on the face of this earth than to "A Wanderer in the Spirit Lands," created by A. Farnese, and published by W. J. Sinkins. The book tells of a soul freed from his body by death, and gradually working his way up to perfection. It is exceedingly dull, for the author has taken a set of theories, abstractions, explanations, away from all that gives them interest or vitality—namely, the circumstances of this human life here on earth—and has tried to retranslate these theories into the terms of another world constructed from his own by no means lofty or original imagination. We leave the wandering soul in a comparatively high sphere listening to a kind of extension lecture given "by advanced spirits from the higher sphere." The lecture-hall in which the spirits assemble is built "of what is the spiritual counterpart of white marble." There you have the whole thing brought to an absurd reduction; in the other world there is a lecture-hall, only it is called the "Hall of Lecture," and it is built of what is the spiritual counterpart of white marble. Many thanks for the information!

"New Wheels in Old Ruts" (Fisher Unwin) seldom succeeds in being funny. Mr. Henry Parr tries an old game—the difficulties of a walking tour, the squabbles and idiosyncrasies of Higgins, the Reviewer, the Artist, the Photographer and the Boy. He succeeds, however, in giving us the impression that the party must have had an exceedingly slow time of it, which for various reasons we do not for a moment believe was the case. For one thing, we believe that Mr. Parr was far more interested than he pretends in the sentiment and beauty of his journey to Canterbury by the old pilgrims' road, and why he should have tried to cover the real excitement of his expedition in the rags of travellers' wit is more than we can explain.

With "The Stanley of the Turf" (Chapman & Hall), by Mr. J. Snowy, we come to a traveller who has something to say. Mr. Snowy is an eminent and widely experienced member of his profession, and his adventures as tipster and booky in Great Britain, Australia and India will be a source of great interest to those who know about these matters and of even greater wonder to those who do not. What Mr. Snowy lacks in elegance of style he makes up in naïveté.

To mention Mr. John Buchan's "Scholar Gipsies" (John Lane) with the recommendation of Mr. J. Snowy still on our lips is such a violent absurdity that Mr. Buchan will surely accept our apologies with amusement rather than indignation. The exigencies of journalism make almost as strange bed-fellows as the limits of a photographer's window, where you may often see a bishop and a chorus girl displaying their rival claims to public attention. Mr. Buchan writes of the Road and the careless life under the sky, and he writes in a style which we are accustomed to associate with the somewhat militant love of such things. He is spirited and picturesque, and we have only two objections to make: one is concerned with his style, the other with his theme. To illustrate the first, let us take this protasis from the beginning of a successful and striking paragraph. Mr. Buchan writes: "But if we dwell more or less in a shadowed valley and cohabit with solemn skies and windy heights . . ." Surely if a man would write in this style he should drop the "more or less"—the expression spoils the dignity and rhythm; it could only be justified on the supposition that Mr. Buchan was indulging in a piece of facetious clowning with his own style, a sort of dig in the ribs for Sir Thomas Browne; and we see no reason for facetiousness here. Maybe that "more or less" was inserted for the sake of accuracy; but accuracy is no concern of the artist, and the valley of the Tweed will bring no libel actions. "And windy heights" is also *de trop*; but enough of such cavilling. The second objection is that Mr. Buchan somewhat wearies us with reiteration and preaching. He loves the vagrant life under the sky. Very well, we are quite willing to sit still and see what he makes of it, to look at life through his eyes. But a *parti pris* is of no value in itself, and we do not want bare assumptions thrown at our heads. No one has more of the adventurous and open-air spirit than Mr. Kenneth Grahame, but we have an impression that he always exhibits this spirit illustrated, at work. If an artist loves one thing more than another, it is his business to show us where he finds this thing; at the first blast of the trumpet or bang on the pulpit-desk our interest flags.

Mrs. Veitch has collected a set of "Border Essays" (Blackwood), by Professor Veitch. Mr. Buchan finishes an essay on the men of the Upper Tweed with his praises:—"There died but the other day the last of that generous line of succession, Professor Veitch, who wrote much of the country-side, and knew it better perhaps than any other living man." "The Border Essays" treat of Yarrow and its ballads, its Scott and its Wordsworth, of the original of Scott's "Black Dwarf" with learning, observation and affection.

Messrs. George Philip & Son are issuing a revised edition of Mr. W. R. Evans's admirable "Rustic Walking Routes in the London Vicinity." We have received the second series, which deals with the north-east district from Enfield to Dagenham, from Highgate to beyond Epping Forest. Forty-three walks of some eight miles are here described, with separate charts and the most minute directions; the routes are marked out almost by yards.

THIS WEEK'S BOOKS.

Atlantic Monthly, The (February). Hurst & Blackett.
Australian Duchess, An (Amyot Sagon). Heinemann.
Beau Austin (Henley & Stevenson). Heinemann.
Childhood's Country, In (L. C. Moulton). Bowden.
Classical Review, The (February).
Colour-Sergeant No. 1 Company (Mrs. Leith Adams). Jarrold.
Disease, Wasted Records of (C. E. Paget). Arnold. 2s. 6d.
English Literature (S. A. Brooke). Macmillan. 1s.
Forum, The (February).
Gazetteer of Great Britain and Ireland. Cassell.
Geographical Journal, The (February).
German Menace and its English Apologists, The (E. E. Williams). Henry.
Goethe's Faust (R. McLintock). David Nutt. 10s.
Guesses at the Riddle of Existence (Goldwin Smith). Macmillan. 6s.
Heroes and Hero-Worship (Thos. Carlyle). Chapman & Hall.
Her Golden Sorrow (Anon). Stevens.
His Divine Majesty (W. Humphrey). Baker. 6s. 6d.
Human Nature, On (A. Schopenhauer). Sonnenschein. 3s. 6d.
Joint-Stock Companies, Handy Book on (Jordon and Gore-Brown). Jordon. 5s.
Kakemonos (W. C. Dawe). Lane. 3s. 6d.
Khartoum, Towards (A. H. Atteridge). Innes. 15s.
Laws of England, Encyclopedia of the. Vol. I. (A. Wood Renton). Sweet & Maxwell.
Lefroy, Edward Crocroft (W. A. Gill). Lane. 5s.
Lippincott's Magazine (February).
Literary Year Book, 1897, The (F. G. Aflalo). Allen.
Little Regiment, The (Stephen Crane). Heinemann.
Lost Countess Falka (R. H. Savage). Routledge.
Magnihild and Dust (B. Björnson). Heinemann.
Nansen, Fridtjof (J. A. Bain). Simpkin Marshall. 9s.
Notes from a Diary. 2 Vols. (Sir M. E. Grant Duff). Murray. 12s.
Occasional Papers, 2 vols (R. W. Church). Macmillan. 10s.
Phroso, a Romance (Anthony Hope). Methuen. 6s.
Plea for the Unborn, A (Henry Smith). Watts.
Property Law for General Readers (W. C. Maude). Wilson.
Quest of the Golden Girl, The (Richard Le Gallienne). Lane. 5s.
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